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LONDON, SATURDAY, MAY 22, 1841.

REVIEWS

Texas: the Rise, Progress, and Prospects of the Republic of Texas. By William Kennedy, Esq. 2 vols. London, Hastings.

Of lands of promise there is no lack now-a-days, but the road to all of them lies through the wilderness, and perhaps it should be added, with the annexed condition of a forty years' sojourn therein. There are many persons, it is true, who, from the Pisgah heights of their own prospectuses, cry out, "Lo! a land flowing with milk and honey lies at our feet; follow us, and we will guide you thither!" But these are false prophets: they are worshippers of the golden calf, who lure on the greedy multitude with the show of large dividends. Though unable to shorten or to smooth the road, they know how to ingratiate themselves with the wayfarers, by flattering their hopes, and to give authority to their words by demanding payment for them. As the fugitives from Egypt of old did not themselves see the land of Canaan, but bequeathed their expectations to their children; so the emigrant of the present day, to whatever quarter of the globe he may fly, must, in general, be satisfied with beginning a career, of which the success will belong to future generations.

But perhaps some one may exclaim "Oh! we have recently discovered the true art of colonization. We can now transplant, root and branch, a full-blown flourishing community. Colonial grants of land are no longer to be given to individuals, but the soil is to be disposed of at its full value, or, perhaps, a little more, so long as our system is in fashion. With part of the purchase-money we supply the settlement with a stock of labourers, sufficient to save appearances, and so we are sure of flourishing, at least on paper." This is certainly staunch utilitarianism: a company will probably bring more profit from a large territory than an individual can do. But still the specious plan of making the land pay for its required labour, is quite as applicable to one kind of grant as to another, and the true merit of the new system—that to which the extravagant praises heaped upon it are really due—is, that it hands over the whole work of colonization to joint-stock companies. It is not at all surprising that a system which refuses the unappropriated lands of our colonies to poor emigrants, and makes them the gain of an influential portion of the community, should be loudly or even vociferously extolled. Yet we see as yet no reason to believe that the high-priced colonies of Australia or New Zealand are likely to produce better results than the settlements of Talbot and others in Upper Canada, or have fairer prospects than Texas, where good land may be had for a price little more than nominal. The volumes of Mr. Kennedy, describing the rise, progress, and actual condition of the last-named State, deserve the attentive perusal of the intending emigrant, as well as of the statesman and historian.

In 1838 our author was appointed by Lord Durham, one of the Commissioners for inquiring into the municipal institutions of Lower Canada; but being soon after liberated from official ties by that nobleman's return home, he directed his course to Texas, which country he visited under the influence of an undisguised predilection. On his arrival there in April, 1839, he conversed with many of the chief actors in the revolution which had been recently effected. He avowed his intention of writing an account of the country, and was, of course, abundantly supplied with such information as the archives of the new State possessed, with views of Texan interests,

and with professions of polity. Thus aided, Mr. Kennedy has fulfilled his promise, by writing the most complete and agreeable account of Texas hitherto offered to the world. Yet the historical and more original portion of the work (for our author has made unsparing use of Edwards, Newell, and other preceding writers) will to many appear somewhat tedious, owing to the frequent introduction of extracts from official papers, addresses, and speeches: for in the western hemisphere the faculty of discourse grows as rank as the vegetation; and American speeches, no less than American trees, may be fitly called "long weeds." His bias, too, in favour of everything Texan, is very apparent. Avoiding these faults, however, we shall endeavour to gather from our author's pages a faithful description of a country which promises great things, and which has certainly won its independence as a State by a most heroic struggle.

The State of Texas embraces a territory equal in extent to France and Spain taken together. In respect to climate it is most fortunately situated; sugar and cotton are among the productions of the coast, while the plains of the interior are swept by bracing winds, adapted to northern constitutions. To the frequency of these high winds may probably be ascribed the salubrity of Texas. The whole country is intersected by rivers, generally running from north to south, and several of which are navigable in steam-boats from 50 to 200 miles above their mouths. One river, indeed (the Trinidad), is said to have been navigated 400 miles from its mouth; but in a country where, to speak in the language of the far West, "the men are more than horses, they are steam-boats," it may be naturally expected that the feats of steam-boats will not be related without a tincture of romance, and we therefore feel justified in rejecting as unauthentic a very vague report of a wonderful voyage. In general the harbours of Texas are barred, as well as the rivers. Galveston, the commercial capital of the new State, is unapproachable by vessels drawing above twelve feet water, a circumstance which must apparently limit its trade to coasting operations; but still the country possesses ample resources for the development of wealth and enterprise, with the aid of which Art may supply most of its natural deficiencies.

The interior of the country is, for the most part, open prairie or grass land of the best description, on which live stock multiplies with astonishing rapidity. Buffaloes, deer, and wild horses, are the chief possessors of these plains. Edwards, indeed, laments that wild animals, and, among others, the bear, are now growing scarce in Texas. On the subject of noxious insects or reptiles, our author touches with extreme tenderness of phrase. He says that "there are scorpions, which, with a large and ugly kind of spider, named tarantula, inflicting a sting resembling that of a bee, bear an indifferent reputation." Neither does he see anything formidable in the alligator or the rattlesnake. The latter, indeed, will probably be extirpated by the hogs, which increase rapidly, and wage unrelenting war on the whole snake family. There are some who complain of the want of wood for fences in Texas, but this is a mere local want; the country possesses ample supplies of timber, which may be equally distributed by a little exertion. In no other part of the American continent is the valuable live oak equally abundant. One great forest, 300 miles in length, forms so remarkable a feature in the topography of Texas, that we shall here present our author's description of it:—

"The Cross Timber is a continuous series of forests, extending from the woody region at the sources of the Trinity, in a direct line north, across the appa-

rently interminable prairies of northern Texas and the Ozark territory, to the southern bank of the Arkansas river. This belt of timber varies in width from five to fifty miles. Between the Trinity and Red River it is generally from five to nine miles wide, and is so remarkably straight and regular, that it appears to be a work of art. When viewed from the adjoining prairies on the east or west, it appears in the distance like an immense wall of woods stretching from south to north in a straight line, the extremities of which are lost in the horizon. There appears to be no peculiarity in the surface of the ground over which the Cross Timber passes, to distinguish it from the surface of the adjoining country; but, where the country is level, the region traversed by the Cross Timber is level; where it is undulating, and where it is hilly, that also is uneven, conforming in every respect to the general features of the adjoining country. The trees composing these forests are not distinguishable by any peculiarity from those which are occasionally found in the adjoining prairies, or in the bottoms bordering the streams which intersect the Cross Timber. Oak, hickory, elm, white oak, post oak, holly and other trees are found in it. The elm is often found growing luxuriantly far from any stream, and in apparently poor and sandy soil. The black jack, a species of oak, is met with throughout its whole extent, from the Arkansas to the 'Black Jack Ridges,' at the sources of the Trinity. The Cross Timber, in its general direction, does not perceptibly vary from the true meridian."

Owing to the uniform appearance of the cross timber, and its close adherence to the meridian, it has been supposed by some, according to our author, to be a work of art. But the great peculiarity of that forest—its extension in a particular line—may be satisfactorily explained from obvious natural causes. The predominant winds in Texas are those blowing in the line of the meridian. The violent north winds of the winter, while they carry the seeds along, destroy the young trees which rise beyond the shelter; and hence the propagation of timber in the plains where the climate is not modified by the configuration of the surface, must be in the direction of the prevailing winds, and therefore in the meridian. Here we may mention also the remains of an extinct vegetable world; silicified trees are elsewhere not uncommon; but Texas alone, we believe, can boast of "a forest of several hundred acres of trees standing, which are turned to stone." We recommend this petrified forest and its environs to the scrutiny of the geologist.

Under Spanish misrule, Texas lay a boundless waste. A few missions and presidios, or small forts garrisoned by convicts, served merely to maintain the claim of dominion over it. The Anglo-Americans, however, broke a commercial road through it from their Western Settlements to Central Mexico. But the fears with which that bold and adventurous people inspired their Spanish neighbours, are plainly expressed in the declaration of a Mexican ruler, that "he would forbid the birds flying across the frontier." Yet the Anglo-Americans continually pressed on the Mexican territory, till at last they were allowed to establish themselves within it. The schemes and attempts of Aaron Burr and Philip Nolan to revolutionize Mexico, and make the most of the frontier territory, fully show how deeply rooted were the causes which have led to the independence of Texas. The European world is hardly aware how long the seeds of revolution lay germinating in that soil. A plot was also entered into in 1826 by the Cherokees to seize a part of Texas, but was frustrated by treachery and the vigilance of the white men. The leader of the Cherokees, on that occasion, was Hunter, whose account of his early captivity among the Indians made him the lion of London coteries a few years back. The truth of his narrative was, at the time of its publication, posi-

tively denied in the United States, yet Hunter's last efforts bear witness at least to the sincerity of his attachment to the red men. He was murdered at the instigation of Bowles, a half-breed Indian, and chief of the Cherokees, who deserted the cause of the insurgents.

We know not the date of a liberal grant of 21,000 square leagues of land in Texas, said by our author to have been made by the Mexican government to one Edmund Keene. The first grant of the kind that led to practical consequences, was that made in 1821 to Moses Austin, a New-Englander of the go-a-head school, and an experienced backwoodsman. Being unfortunate as a merchant and miner in the United States, he obtained, in 1799, a conditional grant of land, with a lead mine, in Upper Louisiana, or, as it is now called, Missouri. Of this patriarch our author says—

"After winding up his affairs, he removed his family, with a number of others, from Wythe County, by a new and almost untried route, down the Kenhawa River, in 1799, and originated the settlement of the present county of Washington in Missouri. To comprehend the difficulties attendant on this undertaking, it is necessary to bear in mind that to Missouri improvement was, at that period, a stranger. From Louisville to St. Genevieve, between which points were embraced the present States of Indiana and Illinois, the whole tract was a wilderness, traversed by prowling savages only, with the exception of a few French settlers on the Wabash and Kaskaskia. The family of his nephew, Elias Bates, was the first and his own the second, that ever spent a winter at Mine-a-Burton. Durham Hall, the seat which Mr. Austin raised in the uncultivated wilds, was for years the centre of the domestic virtues and an expanded benevolence. His upright character and public spirit won for its owner the affectionate respect of the early settlers. Industry was considerably stimulated and generously rewarded under his influence, and the beautiful village of Herculaneum, springing up as if by magic, indicated the prosperity which had repaid the meritorious exertions of him who might be termed the genius of the place. Unhappily, the exercise of those qualities which were most honourable to his nature, was followed by a second ebb of his fortunes; yet, though declining in the vale of years, his native ardour and buoyancy of spirit were neither chilled nor depressed. In the hour of adversity he turned his eyes towards Texas, and organised a plan for drawing forth the neglected treasures of its exuberant soil by the introduction of Anglo-American labour."

The idea of expanded benevolence in the backwoods savours perhaps a little of conceit. Spacious as those regions may be, they afford little room to the social virtues. It cost Austin much time and trouble to overcome the suspicious and dilatory habits of the Spanish officials. He succeeded at last, however, in obtaining permission to settle 300 families in Texas; and immediately set out on his return to Missouri:—

"The journey homewards was attended by extreme suffering and hardship. From Bexar to the Sabine Texas was then a total solitude, the settlements at Nacagdoches and its vicinity having been destroyed by the Spaniards in 1819. Robbed and deserted by his fellow-travellers, Austin was left alone on the prairies, nearly two hundred miles from any habitation, destitute of provisions and the means of procuring them. In this wretched situation, with nothing to subsist upon but acorns and pecan nuts, he journeyed onwards for eight days, constantly exposed to the weather, at the most inclement season, swimming and rafting rivers and 'creeks,' until he reached the hospitable roof of an American settler, twenty miles from the Sabine. Worn down with hunger and fatigue, he was unable to proceed further. His constitution had received a shock, from which it never recovered. After recruiting his strength, he resumed his course, and arriving in Missouri in spring, commenced preparations for removal to Texas, but a cold which had settled on his lungs, produced an inflammation that terminated his existence, a few days after the gratifying intelligence was communi-

cated to him of the approval of his petition by the Spanish authorities at Monterey. He died on the 10th of June, 1821, in his fifty-seventh year, leaving as a last injunction to his son Stephen, to prosecute his plan of Texan colonization."

Stephen Austin, on whom devolved the task of establishing the intended colony, had new difficulties to encounter in the disturbed state of the government. Above two years elapsed before he could obtain the confirmation of the grants made to his father, or go through the official forms necessary to perfect his title to the land. At length, in 1824, the stipulated number of 300 families were located in the best part of Texas, between the rivers Brazos and Colorado. Let it not be imagined, however, that these settlers sat down at once in affluence and comfort; they had to endure the hardships inevitably awaiting those who march in the vanguard of colonization; and though adapted by previous habits to such trials—though occupying a fruitful soil, a mild climate, and on a navigable river, yet many of them lost all patience, and returned to Louisiana:—

"Hitherto, (says our author) the duties which devolved upon Stephen Austin, though calculated to exhaust the patience and depress the spirit, were merely preparatory to the great work of colonization which had been grievously interrupted and embarrassed. An unlucky fatality seemed from the beginning to weigh upon the enterprise. The commanders of the first vessels that sailed with stores from the United States, owing probably to the inaccuracy of the charts, were unable to 'make' the place of rendezvous at the mouth of the Colorado. One cargo which was safely landed was destroyed by the Caranchahua Indians, in the autumn of 1822, and four men massacred. The settlers were compelled to bring seed corn from the Sabine, a distance of several hundred miles, or to purchase it at Bexar, where it was scarce and dear. They were destitute of bread; and sugar and coffee were only present to them in hope. Their dependence was on the game of the country—buffalo, bear, deer, wild turkey, and *mustangs*. But buffalo hunting was perilous among unchastised tribes of Indians, a failure in the *meat* of the woods had rendered the bears meagre and scarce, and the venison likewise was in bad condition. Wild horses, however, were fat and very abundant, and it is estimated that 100 of them were eaten during the first two years. In this condition of affairs, the withdrawal of a portion of the colonists will occasion little surprise."

Stephen Austin subsequently obtained other grants, and although tormented by the government, and at one time imprisoned for a year in Mexico, he nevertheless persevered, until he had settled nearly 1,200 families in Texas. He must be regarded as the founder of that Anglo-American state, the existence of which began but eighteen years ago. Many tried to follow his example, and obtained grants for that purpose from the Mexican government; but few of them proved successful. Experiments were made with colonies of Swiss, Germans, and of Irish. We have elsewhere related the toilsome foundation and languid condition of Dr. Beale's settlement, at Dolores, on the Rio Grande (See *Athen.* No. 616). The Irish colonies, which never had a healthy appearance, were dispersed in the war with the Mexicans. The Anglo-Americans alone withstood the storms which assailed the young settlements, and have firmly taken root in the soil.

The Mexican and Anglo-American differ so widely in sentiment and habits, that it would be hardly possible for them to move in concord as members of the same community. Mistrust and complaints soon arose between them. But it must be confessed that the petty tyrants who first drove the settlers to appeal to arms, were themselves Anglo-Americans in the Mexican service. These first differences were easily adjusted; but the proof which the colonists gave of high spirit and conscious freedom, was not

lost on the Mexican government; and stealthy means were resorted to for the purpose of increasing the military force in Texas, and of fixing the fetters on the Anglo-Americans, without provoking an open rupture with them. But the colonists felt the dissembled hostility of their rulers, and armed themselves at once to save their liberties. Of the war which ensued, our author gives an ample and very interesting narrative, which we shall here touch in only one or two points, for the sake of commemorating the names of certain heroes who figure in it. But the general outline of these warriors is thus sketched by our author:—

"The American frontier-man may be said to exist in a state of continual warfare:—he experiences the toils of active service in clearing and cultivating his ground, its anxieties in guarding against a treacherous enemy, and its perils in encountering that enemy, and the beast of prey. Confident in what he dare do and can endure, with all the feelings of his nature roused to vengeance by some sanguinary Indian outrage, he sallies forth in pursuit of the exulting savage. Following unweariedly on his trail, he traverses the prairies, swimming the streams, noting every impression on grass, sand, twig, and tuft, reckless of fatigue, hunger, and cold, until he overtakes the remorseless foe, whom, at great numerical disadvantage, he is almost certain to defeat. To men of this class, a campaign is a party of pleasure, and they require only the exercise and discipline of the regular soldier, to make the best soldiers in the world. Mounted on a favourite horse, armed with a trusty rifle, and accompanied by their dogs, they can explore their way through the woods by the sun and the bark of the trees. Clad in their usual homely dress, an otter skin cunningly folded and sewed is the depository of tobacco, ammunition, and means for kindling a fire; a wallet slung behind the saddle contains sustenance for man and horse. On the march, a small daily allowance of maize suffices the latter, which, at the evening encampment, is stripped of his furniture and 'hobbled' (two of his legs fastened together), and thus left to indulge his appetite on the abundant herbage. It is of such materials that the active militia of Texas and the South-Western states of the Union is composed."

Our readers probably recollect the history of Daniel Boone, or, as he is sometimes called, Colonel Boone (for backwoodsmen are generally colonels), who first broke a path through Kentucky, and constantly retreating from civilization, died at the advanced age of ninety-three, with his rifle in his hand, on the remotest borders of Missouri. He amused himself in his latter years, with polishing his cherry-wood coffin. They were men of that stamp who assembled in Texas. Our author relates an anecdote of a Tennessee planter, who removed to the Red River, then to the Brazos, and at last to the Colorado, where he complained to a visitor that he should be again obliged to shift his quarters; "the people crowded on him, and he could not go out with his rifle." The sportsman so molested by the crowd was in his eighty-fifth year! Among the backwoodsmen who figured in the war of independence in Texas, were the two brothers Bowie, one of whom, styled Colonel Bowie, has given his name to the Bowie knife, a favourite instrument of destruction in the far West. Another, better known to fame, was David Crockett, the great hunter of Tennessee. "The whole man, physical and mental, was of frontier growth: his playthings from infancy were the axe and the rifle." He tried his hand in Congress for a time, but found that, though he could rule the woods, he had no power over the political "varmint." He therefore shouldered his formidable rifle, and went to Texas. Colonels Crockett and Bowie, with above a hundred others, perished in Alamo, a fort near Bexar, which they defended with heroic obstinacy against a vast superiority of numbers. The leader of that valiant band was Col. Travis,

in one spirit at founding the fatal "The L appeared corn. eighty walls tw The m about 3 under C able, an tied rif on the p the cry with gre three tin breast-w Anna (captiv he betr of veng a little o said to no ordi Napole David C so, many with ye life of th terms o monwea which Fr won in t In the America contras not only moral d Anglo-A by the life. On courage, cowardic elegy The Tex under th after qu exclusiv professes feed the In short obligati grievanc ing in th by what ing that the Mex sympath ment for to it. T tive unc account them by The ciliating importa tion o Louisian exceed "Sir T Remedy high aut no less th Africa in Havanna this amo simple c vantage tions of

in one of whose letters we discover the very spirit and mode of thinking of the original founders of New England. Just on the eve of the fatal assault of the Mexicans, he wrote,—“The Lord is on our side. When the enemy appeared in sight, we had not three bushels of corn. We have since found in deserted houses eighty or ninety bushels, and got within the walls twenty or thirty head of beeves.”

The massacre of the Texans in Alamo, and of about 300 more, who soon after capitulated under Col. Fannin, made reconciliation impossible, and gave a more deadly aim to the practised rifle. When the contending armies met on the plains of St. Jacinto, the colonists raised the cry of “Alamo,” and in a few minutes routed, with great slaughter, the Mexican army, though three times more numerous, and defended by a breast-work. When the Mexican general Santa Anna (also President of the Republic) was led captive before General Houston, after the action, he betrayed, by his excessive agitation, his dread of vengeance. Having calmed his spirits with a little opium, this sanguinary would-be monarch said to the Texan leader,—“You were born to no ordinary destiny; you have conquered the Napoleon of the West!” Shades of Bowie and David Crockett! Ye, who have “walked into” so many ‘coons, and panthers, and grisly bears, say, did your knives and unerring rifles perish with ye; or—but no; it was politic to spare the life of the Napoleon of the West, and to impose terms on the President of the Mexican commonwealth. The internal dissensions of Mexico, which subsequently broke out, and its rupture with France, secured to Texas the independence won in the field of St. Jacinto.

In the Texan war of independence, the Anglo-American character appears to great advantage; contrasted with that of the Mexicans, it exhibits not only superior intelligence, but even great moral dignity. The inbred civilization of the Anglo-American backwoodsman is not destroyed by the superadded accomplishments of savage life. On the one side were nobleness of purpose, courage, and generosity; on the other, treachery, cowardice, and vindictive cruelty. Yet our eulogy must be confined within just bounds. The Texans had voluntarily placed themselves under that despotic rule with which they soon after quarrelled. They became members of an exclusively Roman Catholic community; they professed themselves to be Roman Catholics, feed the priests, and submitted to Popish rites. In short, they voluntarily took upon themselves obligations which they afterwards flung off as grievances. Provided they gained a firm footing in the country, they seem to have cared little by what engagements they gained it, well knowing that the only difficulty would be to outwit the Mexican government in the first step. Our sympathy with their cause suffers some abatement from the suspicion of fraudulence attaching to it. The apostasy of the Texans from exclusive uncompromising Catholicism may, perhaps, account for the animosity manifested towards them by certain political leaders.

The Texan government, in the view of conciliating Great Britain, prohibited, in 1836, the importation of African slaves. The slave population of the state, introduced chiefly from Louisiana, is supposed by our author not to exceed 10,000. On this subject he observes:

“Sir T. F. Buxton, in his ‘Slave Trade and its Remedy,’ states that he had been informed, ‘upon high authority,’ that, within the years 1837 and 1838, no less than 15,000 negroes had been imported from Africa into Texas.’ The Dutch Consul-General at Havannah has gone a step further, having said that this amount had been imported in a single year. A simple calculation will show the monstrous extravagance of these allegations, apart from the dispositions of the government and people of Texas. The

‘wholesale price of Africans’ at Havannah was, according to Mr. Turnbull, in 1833, above 300 dollars a head. Add about another hundred dollars for freight and risk of capture, and the gross amount of money alleged to have been expended, in one year, on slave labour, by a young and recently desolated country, reached the enormous sum of six millions of dollars, or 1,200,000! The readers of this work are acquainted with the condition of Texas in the period specified, and can appreciate the pains-taking impartiality that has held the Republic up to the reprobation of the world on the basis of such ‘facts’ as these.”

Under the original system of free grants, a square league of land, or nearly 4,500 acres, might be obtained in Texas for about 40*l.* laid out in official fees. Austin added a small charge, of about 7*d.* an acre, to cover his own expenses. He gave 640 acres to every head of a family; half that quantity to the settler's wife; a fourth for each child, and an eighth for every slave. An estate of 1,300 acres might accordingly be had in Texas for 40*l.*, which sum would purchase but 30 acres in New Zealand, under the new system. Free grants of land have now ceased, but doubtless cheap land may be procured there for a few years more. The unappropriated territory still amounts to nearly 150 millions of acres; the appropriated lands have little more than a third of that extent. The population, now amounting to 200,000 souls, rapidly increases, and we see no reason to doubt that Texas will, ere long, be reckoned among the most prosperous states of the New World, and that it will exhibit to the greatest advantage the energy and love of liberty of the race which people it.

Home Sketches and Foreign Recollections. By Lady Chatterton. 3 vols. Saunders and Otley.

It is just possible to conceive how a light-hearted and agreeable person, such as Lady Chatterton appears to be, to whom life shows all *couleur de rose*—its rags presenting themselves to her in their picturesque aspect, and its wretchedness in the sentimental one—may think it worth while to note down such personal recollections as are recorded in these volumes, as memorials of time enjoyed, and for future personal reference. Nor is it quite impossible, though more difficult, to apprehend that they may have an interest for some of her friends. But that calumny of the imagination,—by whatever amount of adulation induced,—which could persuade the author of these inconsiderable, if not “unconsidered trifles,” to attach any literary value to them, and tempt her to the deliberate act of publication, is altogether beyond the estimation of cool criticism. Subjects the most hackneyed treated in the most commonplace way, truths the most trite delivered as if they were valuable discoveries in ethics, places which everybody has seen described by their most familiar features, the merest platitudes offered “as who should say Sir Oracle”—in fact, an air and attitude of poetical inspiration assumed, with an unconsciousness as remarkable as that of M. Jourdain that the author is, all the time, speaking the most inveterate prose—these are the characteristics of volumes, which, though bearing testimony on every page to the kind and gentle spirit of the writer, are, nevertheless, an abuse of the prerogative of the press. We recollect no other work in which the *ego* of the professor has been so copiously used, and none in which it has been employed to cover such mere—it would be ungracious to say *twaddle*—if any other word would describe the contents of these volumes. Lady Chatterton does certainly enunciate alike her truisms and her paradoxes with an air of infallibility, which a pleasant manner and a sunny temper may help

to carry off unquestioned amongst her friends—but she should beware of the strong lights of publication,—in these her lighter moods, at least,—for she is equal to better things. The faults of her former work, ‘*Rambles in the South of Ireland*’ are the staple of her present—composed of a sweeping of her study so general that the smallest straws have not been rejected. England, Ireland, Germany and France, have all been called in, to yield their contingent to these disjointed volumes:—descriptions of natural scenery, art, virtue, literary criticism, metaphysics, religion, all are huddled together;—not one of them, however, conveying a single sensible image; indeed, the only distinct impression throughout the book, is that of Lady Chatterton herself, whose personality is carefully introduced amongst them all. Lady Chatterton has the less excuse for imposing a book of this kind on the public patience, because she seems to be very sensitive to the same offence in others, and to take a very fastidious view of the literature of her own day. Occasional hints like the following are scattered throughout the volumes—“That I should dream of writing a new work, when I even think it foolish to read modern publications. One of the happiest and wisest people I know, is Louisa D—; and she never reads anything but old books, those respectable tomes which have survived the changes, and stood the scrutinizing and often purifying gaze of years, and perhaps centuries.” This short extract may serve, at once, as an example of the crude and flippant notions which are delivered as wisdom in the present volumes.

If the indulgence which Lady Chatterton's former works have met with from the critic, be in any degree answerable for these faults, then it is the critic's right, and his duty too, to be somewhat severe in the present instance, however painful this may be, when a lady, and one evidently both accomplished and gentle, is concerned. And here we are reminded of one other prominent fault in the pages before us, for which her “stars are,” probably, “more in fault than she.” Lady Chatterton is, as we have said, evidently a person of kind impulses and generous sympathies—full of enjoyment herself, and, we verily believe, desirous of seeing her own happiness universal; loving the sunny side of things, and, when the dark will intrude itself upon her notice, looking at it through a sentimental medium which she carries about with her, like a locket, and which so greatly softens their aspect that she persuades herself it does so to the wretches who sit within the shadow. In a word, Lady Chatterton is naturally amiable, and artificially sentimental; and has nourished the two qualities in conjunction till they have become inseparable, and, in her own apprehension, identical. On the applause, somewhat injudiciously administered to the former, the latter has, of course, been nourished too; and the consequence is, that in the present volumes we have this goodness put sentimentally forward on all occasions—a conscious, and determined, and unrelenting amiability perpetually obtruded, in a manner which, besides being very tiresome, has a positively disagreeable effect. This is one of the most annoying of affectations;—and not the less so in the present case, because it cannot conceal the genuine goodness which lurks beneath, and contrives to make itself seen without any effort on its owner's part.

After having said so much in dispraise of these particular volumes, we acknowledge in justice and with pleasure, that Lady Chatterton has an eye for the picturesque, a heart for the good and the beautiful, and instincts all in the right direction—a fondness for her country being of the number;—and, if she will consent to be more natural, and abandon the notion that

every crude fancy and undigested thought which comes into her head is worth setting down and stamping as currency, she has talents for the production of something which may, on a future occasion, call into exercise the pleasanter duties of our critical vocation.

Life of Petrarch. By Thomas Campbell.

[Second Notice.]

WE have intimated that the distinctive character of this biography is its air of reality, its resuscitation of the man in his flesh, the surrounding him with his kindred, friends, and affections, and showing him not as a poetical abstraction, but as one of ourselves—a mortal; a mortal “with all his imperfections on his head,” it is true, but with imperfections that render him at once more intelligible, and more loveable, than when he is seen in his lonely greatness, a theme for declamation; a name—no more.

The sources of the information thus produced, are found in Petrarch's familiar epistles, which are, unfortunately, buried in the obscurity of a not very readable Latin. Petrarch, through the garrulity and the somewhat exorbitant self-esteem which were his besetting sins, indulged in communicating to his friends personal details, which time has clothed with the highest interest, and which afford just that sort of antiquarian information that is at present deservedly most sought after. It is pleasant to receive these details, at Mr. Campbell's hand, culled from amidst a mass of dry and wearisome materials, arranged in a lucid order, and illustrated by their mutual bearing on each other, and by a connected thread of story.

It may be, perhaps, that this advantage is purchased by some sacrifice of colouring, by some anachronism of thought and feeling, betraying the reader into occasional forgetfulness of the remote period in which Petrarch flourished; but, on the other hand, it is scarcely to be doubted that received notions on the social peculiarities of remote epochs, are greatly exaggerated. At the bottom of all undeniable differences, which may be traced in comparing distant ages and nations, there must always have subsisted a great substratum of common humanity, which disappears from the ordinary melo-dramatic descriptions of history. We have indeed only to turn from the pages of Livy and Tacitus to those of Apuleius and Petronius Arbitrator, to be satisfied that even the deified ancients were much more like ourselves than scholars will willingly own. It is not therefore easy to decide how far the tone of Mr. Campbell's narrative is unfaithful, or whether he may not, all things considered, have more frequently approached the truth than transgressed it, by his peculiar mode of treating the subject. Of this, however, we are satisfied,—that his book is all the pleasanter for the method, and that we have perused no account of Petrarch that has attached us more to his memory.

The point perhaps the most difficult for a modern to understand, is the intimacy to which Petrarch was admitted by the most haughty potentates of his day; the liberties of speech which they allowed him, and the licence of oburgation and prosing to which they submitted. No small portion of Petrarch's life was spent in inditing—letters shall we call them, or homilies? not merely to the tyrants of the petty Italian states, and the Emperors of Germany, but to his clerical superiors, Cardinals and Popes, who can hardly be supposed to have venerated his learning, as so very superior to their own. Truths, which subsequently have been rewarded with persecutions various as they were cruel, were no obstacles either to Petrarch's fortunes, or the gratification of his love of personal distinction. Luther himself scarcely exceeded the acerbity

of Petrarch's admonitions to the heads of the Church; and the dungeons of Spielberg have, in our own times, been crowded on account of a carbonarism, less hostile to the powers that be. A mitigated specimen will be found in his letter to the Emperor Charles:—

“I am agitated in sending this epistle, when I think from whom it comes, and to whom it is addressed. Placed as I am, in obscurity, I am dazzled by the splendour of your name; but love has banished fear: this letter will at least make known to you my fidelity, and my zeal. Read it, I conjure you! You will not find in it the insipid adulation, which is the plague of monarchs. Flattery is an art unknown to me. I have to offer you only complaints and regrets. You have forgotten us. I say more—you have forgotten yourself in neglecting Italy. We had high hopes that Heaven had sent you to restore us our liberty; but it seems that you refuse this mission, and, whilst the time should be spent in acting, you lose it in deliberating. * * Wherefore do you lose time in consultation? To all appearance, you are sure of the future, if you will avail yourself of the present. You cannot be ignorant that the success of great affairs often hangs upon an instant, and that a day has been frequently sufficient to consummate what it required ages to undo. Believe me, your glory and the safety of the commonwealth, your own interests as well as ours, require that there be no delay. You are still young, but time is flying; and old age will come and take you by surprise when you are least expecting it. Are you afraid of too soon commencing an enterprise for which a long life would scarcely suffice?”

Of Petrarch's treatment of the papal court at Avignon Mr. Campbell speaks in the following terms:—

“The ‘*Liber Epistolarum sine Titulo*’ contains, as it is printed in his works (Basle edit. 1581), eighteen letters, fulminating as freely against papal luxury and corruption as if they had been penned by Luther or John Knox. From their contents, we might set down Petrarch as the earliest preacher of the Reformation, if there were not, in the writings of Dante, some passages of the same stamp. If these epistles were really circulated at the time when they were written, it is matter of astonishment that Petrarch never suffered from any other flames than those of love; for many honest reformers, who have been roasted alive, have uttered less anti-papal vituperation than our poet; nor, although Petrarch would have been startled at a revolution in the hierarchy, can it be doubted that his writings contributed to the Reformation. It must be remembered, at the same time, that he wrote against the church government of Avignon, and not that of Rome. He compares Avignon with the Assyrian Babylon, with Egypt under the mad tyranny of Cambyse; or rather denies that the latter empires can be held as parallels of guilt to the western Babylon; nay, he tells us that neither Avernus nor Tartarus can be confronted with this infernal place. ‘The successors of a troop of fishermen,’ he says, ‘have forgotten their origin. They are not contented, like the first followers of Christ, who gained their livelihood by the lake of Genesareth, with modest habitations, but they must build themselves splendid palaces, and go about covered with gold and purple. They are fishers of men, who catch a credulous multitude, and devour them for their prey.’ This ‘*Liber Epistolarum*’ includes some descriptions of the debaucheries of the churchmen, which are too scandalous for translation. They are nevertheless curious relics of history.”

But the best specimen of the sort of familiarity in which he lived with the great, and the freedom of his discourse, is given by himself:—

“The emperor, says Petrarch, received me in a manner that partook neither of imperial haughtiness nor of German etiquette. We passed sometimes whole days together, from morning to night, in conversation, as if his majesty had had nothing else to do. He spoke to me about my works, and expressed a great desire to see them, particularly my *Treatise on Illustrious Men*. I told him that I had not yet put my last hand to it, and that, before I could do so, I required to have leisure and repose. He gave me to understand that he should be very glad to see it appear under his own patronage, that is to say,

dedicated to himself. I said to him, with that freedom of speech which Nature has given me, and which years have fortified, ‘Great prince, for this purpose, nothing more is necessary than virtue on your part, and leisure on mine.’ He was struck by the freedom of my speech, and asked me to explain myself. I said to him, ‘I must have time for a work of this nature, in which I propose to include great things in a small space. On your part, labour to deserve that your name should appear at the head of my book. For this end, it is not enough that you wear a crown and a grand title; your virtues and great actions must place you among the great men whose portraits I have delineated. Live in such a manner, that, after reading the lives of your illustrious predecessors, you may feel assured that your own life shall deserve to be read by posterity.’ * * I should never end if I were to relate to you all the conversations which I held with this prince. He desired me one day to relate the history of my life to him. I declined to do so, at first; but he would take no refusal, and I obeyed him. He heard me with attention, and then asked me what were my projects for the future, and my plans for the rest of my life. ‘I wish to know what is the kind of life that would most decidedly please you.’—‘A secluded life,’ I replied to him without hesitation. The emperor differed from me totally as to the benefits of a solitary life. I told him that I had composed a treatise on the subject. ‘I know that,’ said the emperor, with vivacity; ‘and if I ever find your book, I shall throw it into the fire.’—‘And,’ I replied, ‘I shall take care that it never falls into your hands.’”

To understand this peculiarity in the writings and fortunes of Petrarch, it is necessary justly to appreciate the rarity of learning in his times, and the consequently exaggerated ideas it was calculated to excite in the ignorant beholder. We must also be sufficiently aware of the utility to be derived, in that age, from the intervention of such men as Petrarch in affairs of state, and the real benefit to be extracted from what we should now consider as their twaddling maxims of statecraft and morality, by men to whom history was a dead letter, and whose knowledge was very closely confined to their personal experience. We read, even in much later days, when books began to be common, and education was more widely diffused, instances of respect, scarcely inferior, which was paid to learned men, whose moral characters were the least calculated to procure for them even toleration; of which Peter Aretine is an example that may stand for many.

But above all, the libels of that age, political or personal, were not widely diffused; and men of ordinary magnanimity might afford to overlook a good deal of vituperation, when it was not likely to lead to revolutionary overt acts. Still, when all these things are taken into account, the state of society which produced such a relation between moral and physical force is not the less inexplicable. Pedantry being the giant vice and the learning of that day, it might be thought that the want of aptitude for common occasions it brings in its train, would have seized upon the understanding of the illiterate great, provoking a commensurate ridicule: of this take the following specimen:—

“In the month of May in this year, 1359, a courier from Bohemia brought Petrarch a letter from the Empress Anne, who had the condescension to write to him with her own hand to inform him that she had given birth to a daughter. Great was the joy on this occasion, for the empress had been married five years, but, until now, had been childless. Petrarch, in his answer, dated the 23rd of the same month, after expressing his sense of the honour which her imperial majesty had done him, adds some common-places, and seasons them with his accustomed pedantry. He pronounces a grand eulogy on the numbers of the fair sex who had distinguished themselves by their virtues and their courage. Among these he instances Isis, Carmenta, the mother of Evander, Sappho, the Sybils, the Amazons, Semiramis, Tomiris, Cleopatra, Zenobia, the Countess Matilda, Lucretia, Cornelia, the mother of the

Gmehli, Anne was of illustrious a classical though some have brid with that Surely ter, even served imperial superiority The in of Italy against I who deli life of D not to b standard personal ne news and effic was essen have abe other. tempera conciliat gift of n ruption, of a patri nor devo disposit it may s feel. An “Petrar a hero; equally eminent attribute advertin trarch w way unj Mr. Can being no taining luminou “It m not excl on the co nides, and self. Bu he knew judging o and coll decide by sion. Pe was gen dwelling general kings an tinctly to him whic mother. agreed to the woul great ma but still self, who am journey o on a pres days to pretty w caring li ambition the migh fourteen said that and red much an candid i were, a b placing debtor a in every with the

Græchi, Martia, Portia, and Livia. The Empress Anne was no doubt highly edified by this muster-roll of illustrious women. It is to be hoped that she had a classical dictionary to help her in understanding it; though some of the heroines, such as Lucretia, might have bridled up at their chaste names being classed with that of Cleopatra."

Surely such absurdity could hardly pass muster, even with female enthusiasm; and, if observed, it was not calculated to impress the imperial correspondent with high notions of the superiority of the writer.

The intimacy with some of the worst tyrants of Italy has been made a matter of reproach against Petrarch by a sect of modern Italians, who delight in opposing to him the writings and life of Dante. This is a matter on which we are not to be led away by a reference to modern standards of manners. Had Petrarch avoided personal communication with the great, he had no newspaper or review at hand to give currency and efficacy to his doctrines. His social position was essential to his influence, and he could not have abandoned the one, without forfeiting the other. This moreover is very much a matter of temperament. *Principibus placuisse viris*—to conciliate the good will of the powerful—is a gift of nature, and if it be not stained with corruption, nor degraded by pandering to the vices of a patron, it is neither derogatory to character nor devoid of utility. To those of a less pliant disposition and a coarser independence, however, it may seem hateful, and men will speak as they feel. An Italian writer of the present day has said "Petrarch was a virtuous man, but he was not a hero; he was a candid and a generous, but not equally a rigid and steady character. To all his eminent qualities one was wanting, the noblest attribute of man—courage." Sismondi, too, in alluding to this circumstance, observes, that Petrarch was always a troubadour,—a remark every way unjust and unfounded. The judgment of Mr. Campbell is worth quoting, not merely as being nearer to the particular truth, but as containing a broad and general philosophy, as luminous as it is amiable:—

"It must be recollected that his friendships lay not exclusively among the rich and the powerful; on the contrary, his Socrates, his Lælius, his Simo- nides, and his Boccaccio, were men as poor as himself. Burns's words will apply to him, that *'well he knew the social glow, and softer flame.'*" In judging of a human character, we must take a broad and collective view of its physiognomy, and not decide by minute differences from its general expression. Petrarch's moral physiognomy, in the main, was generous and independent. It is unfair, by dwelling on partial exceptions, to convert them into general characteristics. He was not a sycophant to kings and emperors. He spoke out his mind distinctly to them; and they put up with freedoms from him which they would not have endured from one another. Nevertheless, as he owns to us himself, he agreed too easily to live at the court of John Visconti, the would-be tyrant of Italy. John Visconti was a great man, not certainly equal to Napoleon in genius, but still the greatest of his times. Judging by myself, who am no idolater of Bonaparte, I would ask who among us would have grudgingly a long day's journey during his life to have seen him? nay, who, on a pressing invitation, would not have stopped some days to share his conversation? Yet we are all pretty well agreed that Napoleon had the fault of caring little for human life when it interfered with his ambition. John Visconti had his virtues, as well as the mighty Corsican. He was the Bonaparte of the fourteenth century, and fascinated Petrarch. I have said that our poet's personal character had a general and redeeming virtue of benevolence. It is too much an error of biographers who wish to be perfectly candid in their estimate of a man, to draw up, as it were, a balance-sheet of his good qualities and defects, placing them like so many pounds sterling in a debtor and creditor account, as if the same qualities in every one man had a positive and equal value with the same qualities in every other man, without

relation to the rest of their character. But, in point of fact, the faults and virtues of humanity are not the same in different individuals, but become different according to their mixture and combination. The compassion of a fool may be as essentially compassion as that of a wise man; but it is not the same virtue when compounded with folly, as when it meets and mixes with wisdom. There is a moral chemistry in the combining materials of our spiritual nature which is not to be judged of mechanically, according to the disunited qualities of those materials."

But it is Mr. Campbell's estimate of Petrarch as a poet that will be most an object of curiosity to a large portion of our readers, and we shall endeavour to give an abridged extract for their satisfaction:—

"One circumstance fills me with distrust of being able to render entire justice to the Italian poet, in so many respects exquisite, which is, that I can make no atonement for any fault that I may find with him by any counter-manifestation of his beauties. A reader will take the critic's word, with slender proving, for any fault alleged against a poet; but, in order to be penetrated with a sense of his super- prevailing merits, he must have evidence in some adequate translation of the works of that foreign poet, if the reader be an Englishman little or not at all imbued with the foreign language. Now, where shall we apply for the means of rendering such justice to Petrarch? We have Homer and Dante transferred, as it were, soul and body into English; but who has succeeded in fully transferring Petrarch's graces into our tongue? The very genius of the two languages seems unpropitious to the task of translating an Italian into an English sonnet. The former seems a flower too delicate to prosper in the stormy climate of our speech. * * I have certainly felt, in the perusal of Petrarch's amatory sonnets, sensations exceedingly different in the degree of respect for him which they inspire. When I found him describing himself haunted, not metaphorically, but optically and corporeally, by the image of his absent mistress, and comparing the sacredness of her birthplace to the Bethlehem where our Saviour was born, I have not been able to banish a momentary suspicion that this was madness, which, if it had not run upon love, would have taken some other subject. The passages, however, which excited this conception, are not numerous, and the entranced features of his muse seldom lose their loveliness in these sibylline con- tortions. Laura ever and anon presents herself, a minute picture, to the mind's eye—her very veil and mantle, her features, her smile, her step—and we are in love with Laura. I must say, however, that we are rather smitten by her outward beauty than rapt into interest with her mind. * * Again, there is a sameness in the fluctuations of his amatory feelings, which is scarcely more amusing than if they had no fluctuations at all. His heart is a love-ther- mometer of hope and despair, which rises and falls between their extreme points, though generally in- clining to the melancholy zero. A spice of jealousy for a suspected rival, or a tone of anger, methinks, would sometimes relieve this monotony, like a dis- cord in harmony, that makes music seem more nat- ural. There are times when all lovers are naturally enemies. I demur to calling him the first of modern poets who refined and dignified the language of love. Dante had certainly set him the example. It is true that, compared with his brothers of classical anti- quity in love-poetry, he appears like an Abel of purity offering innocent incense at the side of so many Cains making their carnal sacrifices. Tibullus alone anticipates his tenderness. At the same time, while Petrarch is purer than those classical lovers, he is never so natural as they sometimes are when their passages are least objectionable, and the sun- bursts of his real, manly, and natural human love seem to me often to come to us struggling through the clouds of Platonism. * * I feel little inclined, besides, to dwell on Petrarch's faults with that feline delicacy of vision which sees in the dark what would escape other eyes in daylight, for, if I could make out the strongest critical case against him, I should still have to answer this question, 'How comes it that Petrarch's poetry, in spite of all these faults, has been the favourite of the world for nearly five hundred years?' * * So strong a regard for Petrarch is rooted in the mind of Italy, that his renown has

grown up like an oak which has reached maturity amidst the storms of ages, and fears not decay from revolving centuries. One of the high charms of his poetical language is its pure and melting melody, a charm untransferable to any more northern tongue. Even in German, a still harsher language than Eng- lish, the ear often luxuriates in the *singbarkeit*, or singableness, if we might coin such an English word, which the poet's art can elicit, and he wonders that the collocation of syllables can produce a mosaic of sounds so sweet to the ear. But the vocal Ausonian speech carries this spell of melody still higher. It is true that no conformation of words will charm the ear unless they bring silent thoughts of corresponding sweetness to the mind; nor could the most sonorous, rapid verses be changed into poetry if they were set to the music of the Spheres. It is scarcely necessary, however, to say that Petrarch has intellectual graces of thought and spiritual felicities of diction, without which his tactics in the mere march of words would be a worthless skill."

Of Petrarch's prose writings Mr. Campbell has made wise and liberal use. We present our readers with the poet's view of Venetian com- merce:—

"The procurators of the church of St. Mark assigned to Petrarch for his own residence a large palace, called the Two Towers, formerly belonging to the family of Molina. The mansion was very lofty, and commanded a prospect of the harbour. Our poet took great pleasure in this view, and describes it with vivid interest. 'From this port,' he says, 'I see vessels departing, which are as large as the house I inhabit, and which have masts taller than its towers. These ships resemble a mountain floating on the sea; they go to all parts of the world amidst a thousand dangers; they carry our wines to the English, our honey to the Scythians, our saffron, our oils, and our linen to the Syrians, Armenians, Per- sians, and Arabians; and, wonderful to say, convey our wood to the Greeks and Egyptians. From all these countries they bring back in return articles of merchandise, which they diffuse over all Europe. They go even as far as the Tanais. The navigation of our seas does not extend farther north; but when they have arrived there, they quit their vessels, and travel on to trade with India and China; and, after passing the Caucasus and the Ganges, they proceed as far as the eastern ocean."

The following gossip is also agreeable:—

"Shortly after these Venetian fêtes, we find our poet writing a long letter to Boccaccio, in which he gives a curious and interesting description of the Jongleurs of Italy. He speaks of them in a very different manner from those pictures that have come down to us of the Provençal Troubadours. * * 'They are a class,' he says, 'who have little wit, but a great deal of memory, and still more impudence. Having nothing of their own to recite, they snatch at what they can get from others, and go about to the courts of princes to declaim verses, in the vulgar tongue, which they have got by heart. At those courts they insinuate themselves into the favour of the great, and get subsistence and presents. They seek their means of livelihood—that is, the verses they recite—among the best authors, for whom they obtain, by dint of solicitation, and even by bribes of money, compositions for their rehearsal. I have often repelled their importunities, but sometimes, touched by their entreaties, I have spent hours in composing productions for them. I have seen them leave me in rags and poverty, and return, some time afterwards, clothed in silks, and with purses well furnished, to thank me for having relieved them.'

"In the course of the same amusing correspon- dence with Boccaccio, which our poet maintained at this period, he gives an account of an atheist and blasphemer at Venice, with whom he had a long conversation. It ended in our poet seizing the infidel by the mantle, and ejecting him from his house with unceremonious celerity. This conclusion of their dialogue gives us a higher notion of Petrarch's piety than of his powers of argument. It is true that a dogged unbeliever is a provoking antagonist; and this must have been a peculiarly provoking one, for, at this period, there were inquisitors and terrible punishments for heretics, who were occasionally burnt alive, after having had their tongues bored or

cut out. Yet Petrarch complains that these examples could not frighten them out of Venice. Had our poet been in all, as he was in some respects, superior to the prejudices of his age, he would have spoken more indignantly of these horrors. His sense of justice would have been outraged at the palpable injustice of Christianity, divine as it is, starting in competition with infidelity on such unfair terms, that a man for preaching on one side of the argument might be rewarded with a mitre, and, for speaking on the other, might have his tongue bored with a red-hot iron. This was scarcely equitable disputation."

But it is time to conclude. We have suffered Mr. Campbell to speak so fully for himself, that it is needless to add another word of critical remark. It is gratifying, however, to bear testimony to the vigorous health of his literary climacteric.

The Nestorians; or, the Lost Tribes. By A. Grant, M.D. Murray.

It is, unfortunately, common enough to find books that do not satisfy the expectations raised by their titles; but it is rare to find a work like the present, containing much curious and interesting information, of which its name gives no previous warning. Dr. Grant was sent by the American Board of Missions to the Nestorian Christians of Persia; he penetrated to the remote independent tribes whom the plundering hordes of the Kurds have long secluded from European visitors, and he has described their peculiar customs with a simplicity which seems to afford good warrant for his fidelity. He has, indeed, a theory to support—the identity of the Nestorians with the descendants of the lost tribes of Israel,—but he has kept his hypothesis distinct from his observations, and thus enabled those to profit by his facts, who, for various reasons, may be reluctant to investigate his opinions. Without discussing his views of the origin of the Nestorians, or the intimations of their future destiny, which Dr. Grant believes that he has discovered in the prophetic records of Scripture, we shall follow him merely as an intelligent observer, visiting a region and a population which have hitherto been little known to Europeans.

Dr. Grant's labours may be said to have commenced when he arrived at Mōsul. The tumults at Mardin had alarmed his brother missionary, who returned to Constantinople. Having been detained in the capital of Mesopotamia until he could procure guides, Dr. Grant crossed the Tigris on the 7th of October, 1839, and entered the Assyrian plains, where once stood "the mighty city" of Nineveh. After passing through its ruins, he arrived at two villages belonging to the Yezidees, a race stigmatized by eastern and western writers as worshippers of the devil.

"Large and luxuriant olive-groves, with their rich green foliage and fruit just ripening in the autumnal sun, imparted such a cheerful aspect to the scene as soon dispelled whatever of pensive melancholy had gathered around me while treading upon the dust of departed greatness. Several white sepulchres of Yezidee sheikhs attracted attention as I approached the villages. They were in the form of fluted cones or pyramids, standing upon quadrangular bases, and rising to the height of some twenty feet or more. We became the guests of one of the chief Yezidees of Baasheka, whose dwelling, like others in the place, was a rude stone structure, with a flat terrace roof. Coarse felt carpets were spread for our seats in the open court, and a formal welcome was given us, but it was evidently not a very cordial one. My Turkish cavass understood the reason, and at once removed it. Our host had mistaken me for a Mohammedan, towards whom the Yezidees cherish a settled aversion. As soon as I was introduced to him as a Christian, and he had satisfied himself that this was my true character, his whole deportment was changed. He at once gave me a new and cordial welcome, and set about supplying our wants with new alacrity. He seemed to feel that he had exchanged a Moslem

foe for a Christian friend, and I became quite satisfied of the truth of what I had often heard, that the Yezidees are friendly towards the professors of Christianity."

Dr. Grant plausibly conjectures that the Yezidees are a remnant of the Manichean sect, and that their alleged worship of the devil is a popular misrepresentation of the respect for the Principle of Evil which Manes taught to his followers. The late Mr. Rich adopted a similar theory; he declares that the Yezidees only paid the same reverence to the "prince of darkness" which the ancient Persians bestowed on Ahri-mán, and he deemed their intellectual and moral condition superior to those of the surrounding races. Advancing towards the Koordish mountains, Dr. Grant found several spots of delightful scenery, rendered doubly charming by their contrast with the plains, which had been recently desolated by the Koords and Turks:—

"About three P.M. we approached the romantic little town of Akra, imbosomed in gardens and fruit orchards, which, for beauty, variety, and fertility, are unrivalled even in the East. For a mile before reaching the town, our path was imbosomed in arbours of pomegranates, blending their golden and crimson hues, contrasted with the rich green olive and the more luscious but humble fig, and interspersed with the peach, apricot, plum, and cherry; while the unpretending blackberry lined our avenue, and held out its fruit for me to gather while seated upon my saddle. It was the first fruit of the kind I had seen since leaving the shores of my native land, and it was welcomed as a friend of my early days, bringing with it tender recollections of 'home, sweet home!'"

The Pasha of Akra received his visitor with great kindness, which perhaps may partially be attributed to the medical character of the missionary. A little incident which occurred during their first interview throws some light on the system of training adopted for Koordish children:—

"A fine little son of the chief, scarcely eight years of age, came in with a smiling face, bearing in his hand a large pomegranate, which he had used as a mark, and perforated by a ball from his rifle. A suitable present was immediately ordered for the young marksman by the chief, who appeared much delighted with this proof of his son's proficiency in the most essential element of a Koord's education."

Had Dr. Grant listened to the reports given of the independent tribes of Nestorians, he would have advanced no further than Akra; even his friend the Pasha tried to dissuade him from venturing into their wild country:—

"To the borders of their country," said the vigorous pasha of Mōsul, "I will be responsible for your safety; you may put gold upon your head, and you will have nothing to fear; but I warn you that I can protect you no farther. Those mountain infidels (Christians) acknowledge neither pashas nor kings, but from time immemorial every man has been his own king."

The first meeting with the Christian mountaineers was a little alarming; every party of them the travellers met demanded "Who are you? whence do you come? what do you want?"—

"A cry so often repeated in the deep Syriac gutturals of their Stentorian voices was not a little startling; and then their bold bearing, and a certain fierceness of expression, and spirited action and intonation of voice, with the scrutinizing inquiry whether we were Catholics or bad men whom they might rob (as one inquired of our Nestorian guide), bereft my poor cavass of the little courage that had sustained him thus far; and he manifested so much real alarm that I yielded to his earnest request, and dismissed him as soon as we reached the house of the bishop, who assured me that his presence was no longer desirable."

A fortunate incident secured Dr. Grant an affectionate reception amongst the mountaineers:—

"The only person I had ever seen from this re-

mote tribe was a young Nestorian, who came to me about a year before, entirely blind. He said he had never expected to see the light of day, till my name had reached his country, and he had been told that I could restore his sight. With wonderful perseverance, he had gone from village to village seeking some one to lead him by the hand, till, in the course of five or six weeks, he had reached my residence at Ooroomiah, where I removed the cataract from his eyes, and he returned to his mountains seeing. Scarcely had I entered the first village in his country when this young man, hearing of my approach, came with a smiling countenance, bearing in his hand a present of honey, in token of his gratitude for the restoration of his sight, and afforded me an introduction to the confidence and affections of his people."

Sunday is observed with great propriety by this primitive race:—

"A thin piece of board was struck rapidly with a mallet, to call the villagers to church at the rising of the sun. Each person, on entering the church, put off his shoes, and testified his reverence for the sanctuary of God by kissing the door-posts or threshold, and passed on to kiss the Gospels lying upon the altar, then the cross, and finally the hand of his religious teacher."

It was a sacramental occasion, and the simple ceremonial of the Nestorians appeared so pure to the missionary that he became a communicant. The sacrament was followed by "a love feast," conducted on the plan of the *agape* of the ancient Christians. The following additional particulars give a favourable view of the religious condition of the people:—

"In the evening many of the people again assembled for worship at the church, and morning and evening prayers are offered there through the whole week. But, unlike what I have seen anywhere else in the East, many of the people say their prayers in their own dwellings, instead of going to the church during the week; and a small wooden cross may be seen hanging from a post for them to kiss before prayers; a practice which they regard as a simple expression of love to Christ, and faith in his death and atonement. The cross, however, is not considered in any sense as an object of religious worship."

Although the Nestorians are a pastoral and nomadic race, some of the most essential manufactures are practised in the mountains:—

"At the foot of the first range I passed a furnace, where the Nestorians were making lead from the ore, which they find in great abundance in their mines in different parts of the mountains. They also make their own powder, and never depend upon foreign resources for their ammunition. Sulphur is found in the mountains near Jūlamerk, and the people make their own nitre; and generally each man makes his own powder and balls, and also his hats and shoes."

In some respects the form of government seems to approach the Hebrew theocracy:—

"The supreme civil, as well as ecclesiastical, authority over the independent tribes is vested in the patriarch, who holds nearly the same relation to his people in these respects that the high-priest did among the ancient Hebrews, and their government bears a striking analogy to that primitive theocracy. The assembly of elders still convenes, but without much formality; and the avenger of blood still executes justice in capital offences, while the offender may find all the advantages of the ancient cities of refuge in their venerable churches. Exclusion, not only from the privileges of the church, but even from society, is a common form of severe punishment inflicted by the patriarch; and his ban is greatly dreaded by the people. A man of high influence, living near the river on the more direct road from Lezin, is now resting under such a malediction, in consequence of which the people hold very little intercourse with him; for this reason I was desired to take the more circuitous route by way of Asheetha."

Several extraordinary anecdotes are related of the high sense of honour entertained by this people, and of the rigid manner in which they

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exact blood for blood. One instance of this caused the death of two promising lads in a family which Dr. Grant found intelligent and hospitable:—

"One of these boys went out to cut down a valuable tree, in the absence of the parents of both, who were brothers. His cousin forbade him, saying the tree belonged to his own father. But the first boy persevered, while the other went and brought out his gun, and deliberately shot his cousin dead on the spot. An indelible stain would now rest upon the family of the murdered boy, unless vengeance was satisfied according to immemorial usage; and the bereaved father, who was the legal avenger of blood, could accept of nothing but the blood of his brother's child, and they were both buried in one grave before the setting of another sun!"

The patriarch of the Nestorians appears worthy of his high office; Dr. Grant remained with him five weeks, and had frequent occasion to admire the wisdom and patience he displayed in preserving harmony between the several tribes of his spirited mountaineers and the Koords by whom they are surrounded. He was called upon during the visit to decide upon the fate of two Koords who had been taken prisoners from a tribe which had recently put two Nestorians to death. These men were innocent of the murder, but as they belonged to the guilty tribe, the patriarch found it difficult to devise a pretext for saving their lives:—

"After due deliberation and investigation of the case, the patriarch at length decided that, inasmuch as his people had brought the captive Koords into their own houses, they had, in a sense, become their guests, and, consequently, their lives must be spared. But they might accept a ransom from the Koords; and thus the matter was finally settled."

After an absence of eight months, Dr. Grant rejoined his friends in Ooroomiah, having removed the doubts as to the practicability of visiting the mountains uninjured by the Koords on their borders. It is, however, sufficiently obvious that he was mainly indebted for his safety to his medical character; he had secured the patronage and protection of patients from the mountains before he crossed the border, and the fame of his cures ensured him a welcome from every chief who was sick, or who imagined himself to be so. The success of the medical missions established by the Americans has been unvaried; and we think it a matter well worthy the attention of our missionary societies to consider whether the elements of medical science ought not to form a part of the instruction of those whom they send into distant and barbarous lands.

ANTHOLOGY FOR 1841.

It was the design of these Anthology papers, conceived in the very gentlest mood of the critical spirit, to establish a sort of levee, at which we might present to that great potentate the Public many an aspirant who had no pretensions sufficient to sustain the honours of a separate introduction: and wherever, amongst their possessions, we have been able to find a jewel which they could legitimately call their own, or a rose, or even a simple wild flower which they had reared, we have taken pleasure in decking them with it for the occasion, and offering our testimony to its brilliancy or its beauty. The reader, however, cannot rightly appreciate our benevolent intentions, without a knowledge of the poverty of the materials with which we have to deal; and we have been at times inclined, in our own justification, to expose to him a specimen of the weeds and rubbish in which we have to work—the stores which we have to rifle for the few sweets that we are enabled to present. In a host of cases, the kindest thing we can do to the aspirants themselves is merely to hand in their names, without calling attention to their pretensions, though it is difficult, indeed impossible, to make any one of the writers believe this. However—like those who have to make up for lost time—

As one who in his journey baits at noon,
Though bent on speed—

let us, without further parley, introduce our first specimen in the person of—

'*Imagination, with other Poems*,' by Louisa Frances Poulter—a lady in whom we are glad to recognize indications of talent, which, though it cannot supply the hiatus left by death in the department of female poetry, will console us with the assurance, that the spirit which prompted the past has not withdrawn all its inspiration. In fact, were there no other merit discoverable in this volume, we should gladly seize on the opportunity of praise which is afforded by the evidence, to be found in every page, of careful revision, and attention both to harmony of versification and choice of words. Our young poets and poetesses are so apt to fancy that everything is to be accomplished by the aid of inspiration alone, and that the poet's eye in a fine frenzy rolling" is sufficient to compensate for the want of the poet's pen methodically correcting, that they content themselves with the mere scum of the mind, forgetting that both thought and melody are, for the most part, like pearls, to be sought below the surface. And what is the consequence?—out of all the volumes which we have noticed in our Anthology, and which, "leaving our fear of heaven on the left hand, and hiding honour in our necessity," we have often stretched our consciences to praise—which is there that has taken root in the public estimation, and of which posterity will even know the name? We therefore congratulate Miss Poulter on the taste and perseverance which have led her rather to imitate the chaste minstrelsy of an age now past, than join in the careless and ephemeral whisperings which make up the content of to-day. The great fault in 'Imagination' is, the want of all arrangement—the absence of all plan. The execution, however, is better than the design; and we offer in proof the following address to the subject of the poem itself, which, however academic in the structure of its verse, will scarcely be read without pleasure:—

Mysterious Power! When Life's unvaried scene
Yields naught of freshness, naught but what hath been;
When o'er each object colourless and bare
Blows with a chillier breath the nipping air;
When spirits sink, when Time hath played his part,
And slacked the hurried beatings of the heart;
Say! hast thou spells to clear the deepening gloom,
And stretch one line of brightness to the tomb?
How numbed the springs of passion in our soul,
Since first they throbb'd beneath thy fierce control!
Since, led by thee, in jound hour of prime
Careless we dallied with fast-fleeting Time;
In humid valley, or by haunted stream,
With devious steps pursued thy fickle beam;
And heard inspiring voices echoed round
From dusky hill, and soft-receding ground;
Hidding us, while Youth's pulse as yet did play—
We might be All, or Nothing—speed our way!

Strange awful mystery of waking Dreams!
Is all unreal, that so vivid seems?
Lost, lost in Thought, I wander far away—
The Dead rise up, and turn my Nights to Day;
Winter is past and gone—the jocund Earth
Casts sadness to the winds, and rings with mirth;
From every tree, green hedge, and hawthorn bush,
The blackbird calls the lone melodious thrush;
And distant floats upon the liquid air
The cuckoo's joyous note, that mocks at care.
Come, dear Companions of my happiest hours!
Through pleasant fields, and meadows gemm'd with flowers,
The peaceful Itchen's clear bright waters glide,
And Youth's light footsteps wander by their side;
Let us go forth to scent the fragrant air,
And Nature's vernal gifts together share;
Come with your radiant smiles, and we will roam
Till the slow Curfew bids us think of Home;
Those hands I thought for ever still and cold—
Those dear warm hands, within my grasp I hold;
Those eyes, I thought fast closed, upon me beam—
There is no Grief, no Death—twas all a hideous Dream!

Turn we now to '*Poems*,' by Mrs. Follen.—This is a little volume by an American lady, and reprinted (we presume) in England—a sort of literary homage paid to the Old Country. There is occasionally a freshness about Transatlantic poetry, resulting from the strange juxtaposition of savage with civilized life, and the many new sources thence opened to the imagination—not to mention the new imagery afforded by unpainted scenery, and flowers as yet unknown to song—which gives it an air of nationality, a native grace not inherited, but acquired; a peculiarity which favourably distinguishes the individual from its species, and which approaches something nearer to creation than can be said of modern European minstrelsy in general. It is the absence of this indi-

viduality which constitutes in our eyes the great defect of the volume before us. Our English poetic market is already overstocked with home produce, and we look for something in our imports which may tell of the distant land from which they came.

'*Poems by a Slave in the Island of Cuba recently liberated*,' translated from the Spanish, by R. R. Madden, M.D.—To expect high poetic excellence in a production like the present, would be indeed expecting to gather grapes of thorns; but the thorn has its blossoms as well as the myrtle, and sometimes a moral beauty may cling round them, and atone for their want of inborn hue or fragrance. Here is the conclusion of a short poem entitled 'Cuba.'

Cuba, oh, Cuba, when they call thee fair!
And rich and beautiful, the Queen of Isles!
Star of the West, and ocean's gem most rare!
Oh say to them who mock thee with such wiles
Take of these flowers, and view these lifeless spoils
That wait the worm; behold the hues beneath
The pale cold cheek, and seek for living smiles,
Where beauty lies not in the arms of death,
And bondage taints not with its poisoned breath.

The major part of the volume is occupied by a poem of Dr. Madden's own, under the name of the 'Sugar Estate,' which, without pretension to much polish or power of description, has some passages of simple truth and earnestness which win their way to the heart, and make us almost ready to weep that such things should be. Take, for instance, the superintendent's account of himself:—

With twenty hours of unrelenting toil,
Twelve in the field, and eight in doors, to toil
Or grind the cane—believe me few grow old,
But life is cheap, and sugar, sir,—is gold.
You think our interest is to use our blacks
As careful owners use their costly hawks;
Our interest is to make the most we can
Of every negro in the shortest span.
As for the women, they embroil estates,
There's never peace with them, within your gates:
They're always shaming, skulking from the field,
And most abusive when their backs are wealed.
Sure to be sick when strangers pass this way,
They take advantage of us every day;
For well they know, the Cude cannot bear
The thoughts of flogging while his friends are here.
As for talk of marriage, you must jest.
What! marry wretched negroes by a priest!
Why, sir, there's not a priest within some ten
Or twelve good leagues of the estate—and, then,
Were one to come, the Count would have to pay;
I marry all the best and cheapest way.
We have not many marriages, 'tis true,
The men are many and the females few.

We stall our negroes as we pen our sheep,
And hold them fast as good stone walls can keep
A negro gang, and ev'ry night you'll find
The "spell" released, in yonder square confined,
We have, no doubt, our runaways at times,
And flight, you know, we count the worst of crimes.
Slaves who are flogged and worked in chains by day,
Left in the stocks all night—you think would stay
On the estate as soon as they're set free,
And yet the fools again will dare to flee.
We are not always scourging—by the way,
Tuesday in common is our flogging day;
At other times we only use the whip
To stir the drones and make the young ones skip;
Then as to food, you may be sure we give
Enough, to let the wretched creatures live:
The diet's somewhat slender, there's no doubt,
It would not do, to let them grow too stout;
Nor is it here, nor on estates around,
That fat and saucy negroes may be found.

Nor must we omit the few last lines, which will speak for themselves:—

Ah, Señor Mio! briefly I replied.
The words you speak are not to be denied;
You know too well your duties, it appears,
For me to question or dispute your fears;
Too well you know the torments you inflict,
For me to doubt the sufferings you depict.
Too well you've done the business of your lord,
To fail to be detested and abhorred;
Too much have harassed and oppressed the poor,
For me to think your system can endure.

Your fields are fair and fertile, I allow,
But no good man can say—"God speed the plough."
There's wealth unfailing in your people's toil;
'Twould wrong the poor, to cry—"God bless the soil,"
'Twere asking blood to beg that God would deign
"To give the early and the latter rain,"
One prayer indeed can hardly be suppress,
God help the slave, and pity the oppress.

Here, for the present, we conclude.

The Queen's Poisoner: or, France in the Sixteenth Century; a Romance. By Louisa Stuart Costello. 3 vols. Bentley.

THERE was so much graceful description, pleasant antiquarian knowledge, and shrewd perception of

character, in 'The Bocages and the Vines' of our authoress, that a romance from French history was all but inevitable as a sequel to her delightful book of French travel. She is here dealing with the time, place, and persons, selected by Ainsworth for his 'Crichton'; and, courtesy to the sex apart, she meets him well on his own ground. Indeed, a better historical novel, in some respects, does not come before us once in seven years. Miss Costello has got possession of the true colours of old France,—not merely such nominal emblazons as decorate misals and chronicles—not merely the details of its architecture, the outward and visible signs of its life, its apportionment of the day to business, sleep, or pleasure,—but the spirit of these things has passed through her painter's eye into her poet's heart; and she gives it forth in her pages with an ease, force, and freedom from affectation, which are charming. In her resolution, however, to be correct, and her anxiety to be picturesque, she has fallen into the common fault of including too many passages of the strange and complicated history, in which the inscrutable Catherine de Medicis and her familiars played a main part, before, during, and after the famous "Massacre." She shows a fine sense of character, in her sketch of Le Petit Feuilant, and others of the false and flimsy court favourites. What we see of the loyal-hearted Coligni is good; and the more prominent portrait of Charles the Ninth, with his feebleness, his remorse, his glimpses of boyish gentleness and boyish feelings, and the terrible frenzy in which his life closed, betrays nothing of the woman, in either weakness of outline or tawdriness of colour. Miss Costello is less successful in her resuscitation of the Queen Mother,—that dark compound of the sorceries of ambition, and the subtleties of womanhood—of all that was most horrible, and much that was so fascinating, demanded for her adequate presentation, the master hand of him who knew how to combine all the looseness of a courtizan with all the dignity of a queen, in the life and death of Cleopatra. Miss Costello's 'Poisoner,' too, is merely the Iago of melo-drama over again. The book has a love-story; and Claude and Alix, we suppose, are to stand for hero and heroine;—but they count for little; and their affairs but interest us as bound up with some of the most appalling or mysterious public events, with which the chronicle of History was ever darkened.

The novel contains some of those gay and elegant translations from the elder French poets, which we have already had occasion to commend. Anything more prettily lyrical, and more clear of antiquarian conceit, than the following, it would be hard to find, even among the works of modern love-singers:—

Villanelle, from DESPORTS.

Rosette, methinks the time was short
I left you here alone;
But soon your eye fresh fancies caught,
And straight your heart was gone!
And I so well am taught by you
To laugh at every vow,
That I have learnt to wander too,
And love another now.
'Tis strange
We should range,
Like the bee that flutters by:
Time will show
Which shall know
First repentance—you or I.
While I, in painful absence crost,
Was weeping both our woes,
You, chary of the time we lost,
A newer lover chose!
No vane at every zephyr's sigh
Can veer so quickly round;
None loved you once so well as I,
And none so false I found.
'Tis but fair
I should share
Both your truth and falsehood too.
Time will show
Which shall know
First repentance—I or you.

We cannot but think that the success of 'The Queen's Poisoner' must be such as to tempt Miss Costello further to draw upon French history for materials of romance. She will do well, in any future attempt, to look to the plot and progress of her story more carefully than she has done here. The book is rather a collection of separate scenes, than an entire work; and hence, though we own its richness in material, and its general power of treatment, we cannot close it without a slight sense of fatigue.

OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

The Trustee, by the Author of 'The Provost of Bruges.'—A feeble fifth act, and certain untoward circumstances attending its production, limited the popularity of 'The Provost of Bruges,' but it stands on our dramatic shelf, as among the worthiest and most forcible plays of modern times; and our respect for it disposed us to anticipate good things from a novel by its author. We have not been disappointed. There is a freshness and originality in 'The Trustee' which distinguishes it from the crowd of confessions of stale incident which pass for novels in these prolific days:—the tale is excellently opened, and the interest proceeds from Alpha to Omega, without once flagging. So much art, however, is used in the entanglement of the net of intrigue, that we regret the peremptory rudeness with which it is cleft, not untied, when the story has to be brought to a close. 'The Trustee' who gives his name to the novel, is a finished picture of 'uncle cruel and bold' sketched in the ancient ballad. A merchant of good renown, he carries on a secret traffic with smugglers,—a refuge and stronghold during the troublous times of Harry the Eighth and bloody Mary—he absorbs like a quicksand all the property confided to his charge, by those whom religious or political recusancy force to fly their country; and he destroys not only family inheritances but also family affections by suppressing letters, spreading scandals, and employing the whole dark machinery by which the Iachimos and Sir Giles Overreach's of romance have, from time immemorial, covered honest and unsuspecting men with grief and ruin. In his mid career, among other engines of persecution he calls in Romish bigotry to his aid;—throwing the fatal suspicion of heresy upon those whom he would destroy, but he finds that he has evoked a demon mightier than his own hate; and one not manageable by his measured caution, and is himself well nigh involved in destruction by its enactments, when the tide of persecution is turned by the sudden succession to the throne of the Virgin Queen. So much for Master Richard Waring, the principal character of the book, to whose predominance every other personage has been sacrificed, even Walter Armistead, the hero, (one of his victims,) and Katharine Waring, the heroine, his kinswoman and ward, and Father Lawrence, the gentle and beneficent priest, who is beautifully sketched. The only character who stands at all on the same line with this Archimage of duplicity and mischief, is Scampering Jack—the Robin Goodfellow of the story, who comes and goes, with such a certain power to circumvent and destroy and confound the wicked plotter, that we feel he ought not to have let the misery of any story in which he is concerned, run out to "the crack of doom" which three volumes demand. In short, we recommend 'The Trustee' strongly, as a novel of the old-fashioned class, in which story, rather than character, is the one thing needful, and shall be glad to meet another tale from its author's hand.

Eva von Troth, and other Tales from the German. It is always a disagreeable duty to censure the work of a lady writer, but we cannot in this instance stand on our courtesies. The first two tales contain such questionable morality, as to give rise to a feeling of surprise, that a lady should have thought them worthy of translation. In a literary point of view, 'Eva von Troth' is the best of these tales—the others indeed are mere romantic extravaganzas—but we must express a hope that should we meet again, we shall find the translator in better company than that of 'Eva von Troth.'

The Priest of the Nile, by Mrs. Tinsley.—A romance founded on the faint records which have preserved the memory of Ramesses the Second, must necessarily have the great defect of introducing us to characters far removed beyond the range of our sympathies. This evil is not compensated by constructive skill in the formation or development of the plot; the story is needlessly improbable, and the characters but feebly supported. The time is gone by when the interest of a romance could be maintained by private chambers, hidden galleries, trap-doors, and "long passages that lead to nothing."

The Marrying Man, by the Author of 'Cousin Geoffrey,' 3 vols.—A May-fair tale of drawing-room sorrows, opera-box love, and such distress as Bond-street tradesmen can bring on by poking their bills

into the midst of genteel and extravagant families, is here crossed by a vein of the broadest *Bloomsbury* farce, in the character and doings of a bore, who rules the destinies of all the elegant *dramatis personæ* of the book—himself a vulgar and miserly humourist, and a 'Marrying Man' from whom every one has expectations. Burridge is even more intolerable than the authoress meant him to be. With his cheap tailor, and his Mackintosh overalls, his gross selfishness, his gross love, and his gross presents, no real Vernons would have tolerated him for an hour,—however great his influence, however long his purse, and however poignant their embarrassments. Exaggeration is the fault of the book: for again, no real Jessica Thornton, feeling herself the heroine of a broken-down family,—inasmuch as she perpetually stands between it and ruin, by her power over the brute aforesaid,—would have endured the hatred and contumely of Lady Vernon, although she was "the child of mystery" which she is here supposed to be. We have said enough: those who are not repelled by improbability will find much to amuse them in 'The Marrying Man'; and one group of originals—the Eldertons—is quaint and comical enough to pass for a stray "study" out of Mrs. Trollope's Album of Oddities.

Your Life, by the Author of 'My Life,' by an Ex-Dissenter.—There is less of bitterness and caricature in this volume than in that by which it was preceded; the author's object is to win for the Church the earnest efforts of all its members, so as to increase both its comprehensiveness and efficiency, a far more worthy purpose than increasing their animosity against dissent. The portion of the volume likely to excite most interest, is the discussion of the possibility of effecting a close union between the Methodist body and the Established Church. It is not generally known that negotiations for effecting such a union have been commenced between the Methodists and the Episcopal Churches in America, and that hitherto no insurmountable difficulty has arisen between the parties. But such a treaty in America is comparatively easy, because both parties have recognized representative bodies; the Methodists their Conference, and the Episcopalians their synod of bishops. In England, the Church has no executive or legislative body which could discuss, much less accomplish any organic change; and hence it is useless to discuss "the end," while "the means" by which alone that end could be attained, have no existence. The 'Ex-Dissenter' proposes an important change in ecclesiastical discipline, the creation of a bishop unattached to a diocese, in whom the superintendence of the Methodist preachers should be vested: this is, in fact, the old proposal of recognizing the Methodists as holding the same relation to the Anglican Church that some of the semi-monastic orders do to the Church of Rome. There is no doubt that such a measure would be in accordance with the theory of Methodism as propounded by the Wesleys and their immediate followers; but it is not so evident that the plan would accord with the established discipline of the Anglican Church, and certainly there exists no recognized body or authority by which the question could be determined. We have made these observations because numberless pamphlets have recently come before us with similar proposals; and we wish to impress upon the writers, that before they recommend some favourite scheme as desirable, they should first consider whether its adoption is possible. They must know that none of their plans could be adopted without deliberate examination, and should therefore afford us some intimation respecting the tribunal to whose scrutiny their schemes should be subjected.

The Storm, a Tale: and other Poems, by the author of 'Emmanuel,' &c.—Could the author have condescended to parley with the public in prose, he would doubtless have informed us, through the medium of a preface, that his Poem was an adaptation from the 'Corsair' of Lord Byron—a substantive confession, to which we could have added our critical mite, by owning that it was a very indifferent one. The minor poems are almost bad enough to be original, and for the sake of foregone minstrelsy, we hope they are.

Rosabel and Helvetia, by J. C. Cathrey, of the Inner Temple, Esq.—We would remind our young Templar that the genius of romance was seen walking up Fleet-street with the last ejected crusades, and has not yet returned to her old haunt. Mr. Cathrey

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has indeed called her from the vasty deep of the past, but she will not acknowledge him as a conjuror, and comes not at his call. In sober prose, this volume belongs to that numerous class, whose very "pride of flight" is still a few inches below mediocrity.

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FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE.

Vienna, April.

WELL, here I am; but what can an unobservant mortal like myself possibly discover worth narrating, that has not already been ferreted out and set down in black and white by the Argus-eyed flock who have been here before me? Let us dive down, in sheer desperation, to the Catacombs under St. Stephen's—but no; at all access, I find, has been barred thereto: "Death keeps his court," undisturbed ever since Mistress Trollope feasted her eyes on the loathsome spectacle, in order to dish it up, properly seasoned, with a due quantum of feminine observation, for the edification of all whose stomach was proof against her literary emetic. Failing in this intent, we will repair to the fresh air of the Platz, before the church, and fall into the approved raptures at its delicately carved fretwork, and the beautiful proportion of its tower; but, hélas! the jade Fortune is still adverse: the spire is gone—at least one half of it. You will remember, perhaps, that since the Turks last bombarded the town, this spire had taken it into its head to imitate the one at Pisa, and threatened to topple down, and end at once the existence and dominion of the neighbouring "Schöne Wienerin" (for a particular account of whose Protean life, consult Murray). To guard against any such violent proceeding, the lovely offender (I mean the spire, and not the Wienerin) has been decapitated. It is, however, to be restored forthwith. Or shall we, for want of better occupation, sing the variations to Mrs. Trollope's prelude, and utter stereotyped panegyrics on the Haute Volée—hoist the silken banner of the *crème de la crème*—laud "the enlightened Despotism of Austria," and swear that Austria alone, of all the countries of Europe, possesses the "optima regendi ars," that she is blessed in her government, blessed in her institutions, blessed in the happiness of her people? Look there, cries one, at that spruced dressed group, meriment depicted on their countenances, hastening to the Théâtre Comique in the Josephstadt, or, perhaps, to the military music in the Au-Garten, is not that confirmation strong of the exhilarating and happy influence infused through all classes by the truly paternal rule? Where are the beggars? cries another.

"Nimium ne crede colori," reply I; don't trust too much to outward appearances; don't imitate — or —, who, because they see a gondolier yawn, or hear an itinerant vender of matches cry, "O che vita miserabile," seize upon it as proof positive of the incurable ennui and misery of Venice,—who fancy they see in an old woman cleansing her hair, a hoary Hecuba bewailing the fall of her country, and prophesy that the City of the Doges will have disappeared in less than a century. A city, like Venice, containing a hundred sugar-bakers' shops, and some hundreds of coffee-houses, where a magnificent new palace has been erected in the Place of St. Mark, where steam-boats are daily shooting among the Lagunes, where a Commercial Society and Academy of Sciences have lately been established, from whence a railway is being constructed to Milan, can hardly be so near its last gasp as these travellers assert. No, no; give every one his due. There is much happiness in Vienna; but there is also much secret tyranny. There are one or two I could name, who, were they not hampered, were they not in the same plight as the ghost in 'Hamlet,' forbidden to unfold the secrets of their prison-house, could tell tales of men of letters, and others, who have been crushed under foot, of the secret police, as hard at work in the nineteenth century as ever. But this will never do—I am treading on forbidden ground.

But let us escape from the jostling throng of the asthmatic streets, the whooping of the facre-drivers, and the wheel-barrow of those "vile proletarian serving men," who ruthlessly charge the heels and toes of the passenger in a manner disgraceful to the authorities, if, as I am told, they are fully aware of the nuisance, but designedly don't interfere with the liberties of this numerous class of ruffians. We are already at the top of the Kohl market, and shall be through the palace gates and on the Bastei in a trice. But lo! an affiche there on the house at the corner, "Frische Austern und Englisches Porter-Bier." This was too tempting to be resisted, and we were gratified with an excellent bottle of Guinness. But the oysters! Had I but recollected at the moment Lady Montague's assertion, that "the inhabitants of Vienna are so passionately fond of oysters that they eat them stink or not stink," I should not have been so disappointed. The words are a hundred years old, but they are true, or nearly so, at this day.

Who's that? inquired I of my companion, as he exchanged salutations with a puny sharp-faced little gentleman of Lilliputian dimensions, who was strutting along the Bastei with one hand stuck knowingly in the tail-pocket of his brown coat, while the other was engaged incessantly in taking off his hat to the passers-by:—"The Emperor," was the answer. You know, of course, continued he, the *bon mot* made at his expense, in reference to the Chancellor (Clemens), Metternich, and Count Klam, the late minister of war: "Clemens est noster Imperator—Clam regit exercitum." And that? asked I, as a lady elegantly, but simply, dressed, emerged from her carriage, followed by a livery servant to take her afternoon promenade on the Bastei: Lutzer, the *prima donna* of the German Opera. This lady who is, by the bye, the daughter of a cabinet-maker at Prague, is, like all the Bohemians, a singer, and of great taste: she is said to bear the palm among the female artistes of Germany. Why does not the company in London engage her? This is just the time, when the opera-house here is relinquished for a period to the Italian company. I saw the other cantatrice, Fräulein van Hasselt, in Halévy's 'Jewess,' which part she filled to admiration. The people of Munich lost her for the difference of a few hundred gulden. I ought, however, to call her Madame Barth, which is now her name, as she married a short time since. In the course of our peregrinations on the Bastei I have observed that the ladies, if speaking German, invariably change to French, on the approach of strangers: an odd sort of affection.

In the musical way, there is nothing particularly new here. Nestroy continues to excite the risible muscles of the Viennese, by his local farces and a species of composition in which he is unequalled. Strauss and Lanner draw thousands to the vast saloons of "Sperl" and the "Birne," and turn the heads and bodies of the ladies as much as ever. Morelli has lately become a favourite also in this line. Various are the opinions on the merits of these cele-

brated waltz-composers: for my part I prefer hearing the soft and melodious music of Lanner to Strauss's, which is fuller of abrupt pauses and startling transitions. "When Lanner plays we dance, say the Viennese,—when Strauss plays we must dance." The other evening I was at the Hof Theatre, where 'Hamlet' was faultlessly given. "Do you understand the German dialogue," asked an Englishman who sat in the parterre in front of me: "Tolerably well," was the answer, "but I have read it so often that"—"What," said he, has it been translated then into English?" Imagine my horror. They say "home-keeping youths have ever homely wits." I am afraid this may be said of many travelled ones, especially if sent abroad for their education, as it is called. Such a crowd of pleased and merry faces I never saw at a representation of 'Hamlet' before; persons of both sexes were devouring ices and confectionery with great avidity, and chattering away all through the acts. As Madame Rettich (Ophelia) was singing in the tenderest tone, 'He is dead and gone,' a lady next me pulled out her handkerchief: at all events, thought I, you are an exception to the rest of your light-hearted neighbours. I could not help stealing a furtive glance at the fair one, but she was merely mopping up the perspiration. They are indeed a most comfortable race: "Ein dechter Wiener" is the term, all Germany over, to express a spruce, good-humoured, self-satisfied, chattering kind of person.

The Danube, after being a case of "frigore constitit Ister," the whole winter, is open, and the navigation from Ulm to Constantinople by steam is resumed. Nature is aroused from the dream of its wintry rest, and the grand alley of the Prater is thronged with equipages and pedestrians. But the town will soon be emptied. The first swallow is a signal for the court to remove to Schoenbrunn, and for the higher classes to migrate to their castles, or to the early baths at Carlsbad and Gastein, where

"One bouzes drumly German water

To make himself look fair and fatter,"

a thing highly necessary to persons who dance, debauch, drink, and devour as these do all the winter. An imposing sight it is to witness the noble Hungarian and the new noble Italian guard turn out. Every Sunday, a kind of levee is held in the "Burgh," whither the gaily-dressed officers of these corps, and all the other military and civil notables, assemble in high gala. Every person respectfully dressed is admitted into the ante-rooms, and left free to roam at pleasure among the distinguished throng, almost to within a room of the Emperor. I hear of nothing new in letters here. Grillparzer and the poets seem to be resting on their oars. Sapphir and the wits hatch up as great a number of frothy nothings in the magazines as ever. A severe loss has lately been sustained here, by the death of Chabert Ostland, one of the oldest Orientalists of Austria. He was born in Constantinople, as far back as 1766, from whence he soon after came to Vienna; and for the last fifty years, all the Austrian ambassadors to the Porte have been his pupils, not to mention the renowned Oriental scholar, Baron Hammer Purgstall. —A. Gleich, whose romances, under the name of 'Delarosa,' made such sensation here some twenty years ago, is also dead.

A curious religious sect, which possesses no particular name, has lately sprung into existence here. As far as I can discover, the end and object is a system of universal philanthropy: their forms and ceremonies approach somewhat to the Protestant, and they have totally abandoned all Roman Catholic rites. The custom is, for some dozen of them to meet at the residence of one of the sect, to hear a portion of Scripture explained. One never sees them at church, except now and then when a "Veit"—formerly a veterinary surgeon, to which he added the vocation of poet, now, however, a curer of souls, and favourite preacher—holds forth in the pulpit of St. Stephen's. They may then be seen ensconced in some remote corner of the old edifice, hanging on the powerful lips of the preacher, and viewing with puritanical horror their less attentive brethren.

For years, as you know, attempts have been made to found an "Academy of Sciences" here (see *Athenæum*, Nos. 571-2); but to this hour the originators seem no nearer the accomplishment of their object—indeed, if anything, farther from it. It was in 1838, that twelve of the chief literati presented a

petition to the Archduke Louis,* begging permission to found an Institute of this kind, and it was then currently believed that the request would be granted; but three years have passed, and meantime three of the twelve, Jacquin, Buckholz, and Littrow, are no more; and the place in the Observatory occupied by the last-mentioned is still unfilled, although he has been dead some months. Many others, too, are already beyond the grand climacteric, and there does not appear among the rising generation many calculated to succeed them. It is true, that there were some thoughts of inviting Liebig, the celebrated chemist of Giessen, hither. But however expert Liebig may be, he will fail, I think, in forming the beautiful crystal in question. Historians there are, properly speaking, none; and that philologists are not abundant, is pretty evident from the fact, that not a single person from Vienna was present at the last anniversary of the German Philological Society. In belles lettres, Vienna has enough, and more than enough. This state of things is much to be lamented. At present, there is no means of carrying on a scientific and literary intercourse with the Societies of other States. There is not a single Corresponding Member of the French Institute here, although Munich can boast of three, and Berlin six; and it has been remarked, that of all the capitals of Europe, Vienna and Constantinople are the only ones without an Institution of this kind. A pleasing contrast to this is the flourishing state of the "Medical Society," which lately held its third anniversary meeting, when the late President, the learned Malfatti, delivered his farewell address, and no less than nine archdukes were present. It may be added, that this Society would probably extend the sphere of its utility, were it to allow its proceedings to be printed.

I am happy to see that many useful discoveries in photography have rewarded the diligent experiments of some scientific persons here. Professor Petzwall, assisted by the celebrated optician, Voigtlander, has succeeded in constructing a camera-obscura of such a nature, that Daguerre's invention can be employed, not only in taking portraits, but also streets full of moving persons, or even minute living natural objects. Kratochwill, again, has managed to produce photographic drawings to perfection, not only on silver, but also on copper-plates; while the brothers Natterer have improved on the invention made last year by Professor Berres, and Ettinghausen, in the use of the oxy-hydrogen microscope. A picture lately exhibited by Professor Berres, at the weekly meeting of the "Gewerl Verein," excited universal admiration for its accuracy, clearness, and sharpness of outline. When at Munich, I saw some specimens of photography on a still newer principle, by Isenring, of St. Gall, in Switzerland. Leipzig and the North of Germany seem to take the lead in musical as well as literary productions. Lortzing has lately written a new opera, called "Hans Sachs," the subject of which is the distinction which this "cobler-laureate" of the sixteenth century won from the Emperor Maximilian, on that monarch's visit to Hans Sachs's birthplace, Nuremberg, and his loves with Cunigunda, the daughter of the rich goldsmith of that place. The choruses of the "schuster-gesellen" are said to be the gems of the piece.

ROYAL ACADEMY.

We shall resume our notice of the Pictures next week,—meantime we will take a look at the

Sculpture Gallery.

It is impossible to refer to the Exhibition of Sculptures without one more remonstrance, on behalf of the artist and the public, against the *cave* in which these treasures continue to be buried. It is really disgraceful to all parties concerned,—that England should have to exhibit her national annual collection of marbles to the foreigner, in a cellar; and incredible how an arrangement, implying such glaring mismanagement and disregard of the implied contract with the national expectation, should be, year after

year, quietly acquiesced in by the public. If some two dozen visitors happen to be present, at the same time, in what is ambitiously called the Sculpture Room, there is no chance of getting round the sort of tables on which the more prominent of the works are placed, without a skill in steering, acquired by Londoners in threading the crowded thoroughfares of their great city, but with which the stranger is not always prepared: while the Busts generally, and many a gem of art besides, not forcing their way on to "the floor" by their colossal proportions, are stowed away on shelves, running into corners, which escape the notice of many, and are inaccessible to most persons. To be sure, the principle of their immortality seems to be recognized, in the arrangement which piles them up in those recesses, like the sculptures in an Egyptian tomb, as if for eternity. The Genius of Sculpture, however, immortal as, in his essence, he is, has a mortal part about him, that needs present nourishment; and, if the Sculptors have not influence enough in the Academy to prevent their works being thus *shelved*, at a time when the school of their art is certainly reviving, and its patrons seem to be increasing, the public, which has the greatest interest in the matter, and all the right, should come to their aid, by all its influential organs. A question or two, in the House of Commons, from some patron of the art, at the moment when the abuse is conspicuously before the eyes of its members, might probably be put with good effect.

The present Exhibition of Sculptures contains much that is good, and little that is striking—few works which could be offered to Europe as evidence of a very high condition of the art, but much that proves a sound and healthy and improving one. Our remarks of last year, on the increasing intelligence and excellent workmanship of the school, are more than confirmed, in the present. That simpler and purer style of art, and that careful manipulation, by which its present chiefs replaced the allegorical puerilities and florid exaggerations of the last generation, have spread amongst their pupils; whilst the abstract feeling of the beautiful and power of spiritualization, from which alone the high and enduring triumphs of the art can be looked for, are sufficiently represented here to make it matter of regret that they should be so extensively repressed by the prevailing form of English patronage. The misfortune of the present Exhibition is that which was the misfortune of the last—and is that of Art generally in this country. The talent of the great majority of exhibitors is driven, by the set of its stream, into the course of portraiture—itsself the least interesting form of art, while (notwithstanding the advantage which its materials offer for the representation of rounded forms,—the reproduction of sinew and muscle) Sculpture is the least interesting and appropriate form of portraiture. If the theory which has been, at times, maintained, that the eye is not that one of the features of the face which is the principal seat of sentiment and expression, had ever been held with more seriousness than belongs to a sophism or an exaggeration, its professors might be disabused by the evidence of sculpture alone. Here, for example, we have some of Chantrey's noblest statues and busts—amongst them the figures of the late Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry (1251), and that of the late Bishop of Norwich (1218), for their respective cathedrals—the latter of which we will take as our instance. The Bishop is in a sitting posture, in the attitude of perfect and patriarchal repose. The forward bend of the figure is as easy and unconstrained as if the arc were formed of flesh and blood, instead of stone; and every muscle of the face and wrinkle of the skin and fold of the drapery is rendered with a softness and freedom quite marvellous with materials so unpliant. The illusion would be complete, but for the manner in which this fine statue, like all the other portraits and busts in the room, to use the quaint expression of Charles Lamb, "looks up with its *no eyes* in the sun"; at once contradicting the capacity of this form of art for mere portraiture,—other than monumental portraiture, where it, at the same time, preserves the human forms, and suggests the absence of the informing spirit.

Near to this statue of Chantrey's—and, by its proximity, finely illustrating the appropriate domain of sculpture—stands a work (1219) in which the resources of the art are employed to its consummate triumph,

so far as a single figure is concerned. This work, the *Eve listening to the Voice*, of Baily, is the gem of the Exhibition; yet it can scarcely be called new to the public. It is the same Eve whose figure at the Fountain has, long since, taken its place among British masterpieces, and is as familiar to the public as almost any other work of native sculpture. The rich and voluptuous contours, the polished limbs, and the graceful sweep of outline, are the same; and is the exquisite spell by which all these, in their naked loveliness, are made to breathe the very spirit of purity and chastity. The beauty in both is divine only in its perfection, but human in its character, and spiritual in its complete unconsciousness and simplicity. In fact, it is Eve—in Eden, (and, without a single attribute save its own natural and moral ones, could stand for nothing else—and this is the triumph of art) just as the sculptor has introduced us to her, before,—differing only in the attitude and the sentiment:—the same perfectly beautiful, and as yet *sinless woman*, listening to another of those natural revelations which have been imagined as amongst the poetry of her primitive position and uninstructed heart. Here, the obstacle which portraiture encounters in the sculptor's hands has no place—or is, at least, subdued by other means—the object being to embody a *sentiment*, not to represent an individual:—and so completely is the sentiment conveyed, in this case, by the help of the attitude, that the spectator, the moment his eye catches the figure, involuntarily pauses, to catch the far-off sound which he is sure she hears. The statue is for Mr. Neeld's gallery; and would hold its character in any gallery in Europe. We should be glad to have seen a few more such specimens of the ideal of the art, amid the stone realities of the present Exhibition.

Of works of the imaginative class, there are, however, as we have hinted, some well deserving of notice, and offering great encouragement to such wealthy patrons of the art as have the taste to give commissions of the kind. A marble statue of a *Shepherd Boy* (1241), by R. J. Wyatt, is a very beautiful figure; and a marble statue of a nymph coming out of a bath (1243), by the same, is another full of grace—but one of the numerous and undoubted progeny of the *Venus de Medici*. By its side, (1244) is a marble statue of a girl going to bathe, by P. MacDowell, equally beautiful, and more original: and the same artist has a kneeling figure of a female child, in the attitude of *Prayer* (1223), which has also great merit—in the form, however, rather than the expression. This year, as last, Sir Richard Westmacott is absent; but his son has a figure of *Ariel* (1225) issuing from the split pine—a light fluttering form, finely wrought,—yet not the Ariel, after all, whom we have dreamt of in the visions conjured up by Shakespeare's page. Two bas-reliefs, by Gibson, one (1231) representing a mother holding a drinking cup to the lips of her child, and the other (1236) a scene in the story of Hero and Leander, are amongst the very finest things in the Exhibition,—presenting outlines worthy of Flaxman, and bold and vigorous handling, which makes the other works, of the same class, in this collection, look tame and feeble. A basso-relievo in marble (1230), representing Christ restoring sight to the young man born blind, and forming part of a monument to be erected, in Cloth-Workers' Hall, to the late Mr. Thwaytes, in commemoration of a munificent bequest to be applied for the relief of the indigent blind, and another by Lough (1222), forming part of a monument going out to India for a light-cavalry officer, are, nevertheless, deserving of mention. No. 1243 is a statue, in marble, for the grand staircase of the hall of the Goldsmiths' Company, personating *Spring*, by S. Nixon; whose figure of *Winter*, for the same destination, we noticed, last year. The treatment, in the present instance, is not so bold and original as that employed in the presentment of the ruder season; and, indeed, the subject scarcely admits of it. But the figure is one of exceeding sweetness, and scarcely surpassed by anything in the Exhibition. *Dorothea*, in marble (1222), and *The Wounded Clorinda* (1240), the figure of a female warrior in chain armour, are both distinguished by grace and sentiment, and give Mr. J. Bell a prominent place amongst the exhibitors: and *Poor little Nell*, the heroine of Mr. Dickens's "Old Curiosity Shop," stretched in her marble sleep, by E. G. Papworth (1233), is clothed with that character of ex-

* When, in 1838, we adverted to this fact, Mrs. Trollope thus commented on our observations: "As I have plenary confidence in the wisdom of Austria, I feel confident that the want of it will not long continue to exist. When I state that this confidence was founded on information of high authority," &c. Now here we are in 1841, and yet an "Academy of Sciences" has not been established: another evidence how completely that clever lady was mystified by Prince Metternich, the *haute volée*, and "the paternal government."—Ed.

aerial perspective or colour; brought 37 guineas. A most apocryphal 'Ecce Homo' by *Guida*, brought 50 guineas, whilst an authentic 'Bull's Head' by *Reynolds* (the study for part of his picture at New College, Oxford,) went for but 12 and a half! "What's in a name?"—why, we answer, everything! 'Portrait of a Lady,' not by Reynolds, upon whom it is fathered, 47 guineas: an experienced judge ascribed it with much likelihood to *Cotes*, whose crayon tone the colouring resembles, and whose oil-pictures Hogarth once declared, in a fit of the black jaundice, superior to Sir Joshua's. Two or three good Dutch Peasant-scenes by *Omeganck*, 62, 43, and 115 guineas. 'A Lady served with Oysters,' said to be painted by *Old Mieris*, and we should think as probably by him as by one of those testaceous animals; it is however in his style; 84 guineas. 'A Boy with a Bird's Nest,' by *Murillo*, 100 guineas; a 'Mother and Child' by *ditto*, 130 guineas: anything which ignorance inspired by impudence chooses to call a *Murillo* is pretty certain of bringing in England more than a real *Murillo* would bring elsewhere. Of course we speak at large, without allusion to irresponsible agents or parties. 'Seaport' by *Brill* and *Carracci*, a pale-green picture of some disagreeable merit; 70 guineas. 'Portrait of a Gentleman' by *Rembrandt*, sketchy, and tricky, and theatrical, with his usual ambition for effect however "defective"; 150 guinea. 'A mounted Farmer feeling a Gipey,' by *Morland*; breadth and boldness of touch, but superficial, flat, and monotonous; 210 guineas. Two 'Sea-pieces' by *William Vanderveelde*,—one of good composition though inferior execution sold for 590 guineas, the other for 1120, being the famous *Dundas* picture, and considered among critics a *chef-d'œuvre*: we acknowledge its admirable finish and beautiful tone, and, above all, its truthness to nature, yet can by no means extol such a poor and petty composition, where majestic ocean rocking beneath its ponderous thunder-bearers and traffickers, resembles a fringe of the *Serpentine* covered with toy-shop sails and paper cockboats. Two 'Sea-pieces' by *Backhuysen*, who contests *Vanderveelde's* right to the maritime crown as a painter, present more noble subjects, if less delicate mechanism, than virtuosi look for. *Backhuysen* has the sublimer, *Vanderveelde* the sweeter pencil; one artist appearing to delight in storms, his rival in calms, like the petrel and the halcyon respectively: these two works brought 425 and 440 guineas. Aquatic natures, such as the Dutch and the English, are by nature given to water-pieces. Here were two 'River Scenes' by *Cuyp*, who loved the sunny air like a lark, and the sunny earth like a lizard, and the sunny water like a goldfish; he seems to dissolve his colours in gold, and to paint the three elements as if all saturated with that lustrous metal; an alchemist might hope to extract more of it from these splendid pictures than was paid for them,—1,050 and 1,450 guineas. They are nevertheless both inferior to many a specimen we have seen—e.g. that at Cleveland House, or at Viscount Alford's, or at Dulwich, or that, which looks like a scene from the Dutch part of Elysium, at our National Gallery. *Cuyp* now and then *gilt* the refined goldenness of his colours, as in these two river pieces; his clouds "turn out their lacquered linings" on the day, and his gable-ends suggest houses built of sulphur: this produces a somewhat tawdry effect; when Nature lights her objects from behind, she softens down the contingent harshness into a broad luminous diffusion, or interposes a mellowing atmosphere, and thus too does *Cuyp* when he does best. 'Travellers Halting,' by *Karel du Jardin*, 410 guineas: these would have about covered the picture twice, which may give some idea how it was valued. A landscape by *Pynacker*, engraved as 'The Humane Traveller,' 180 guineas; a better one by *Ruyssdael*, 330. Two little 'Village Scenes' by *Teniers*, pretty good for Young David, though super-excellent for Old, 215 and 165 guineas. A respectable, but not first-rate, *Wouwermans* from the Choiseul Collection, 390 guineas: it is, as customary, a Grey Horse, with landscape and human-kind to make up. A middling *Berghem*, 165 guineas. A large 'Seaport,' graced with the name of *Claude*, apparently sold for 610 guineas. There were no less than seven pretenders to the name of *Rubens*, two without any real pretensions; and two with a good deal, portraits of 'Baron and Baroness De Viry,' which brought 460 and 410 guineas,—the

former of more equable merit, the latter, whose *car-nations* beyond doubt this artist's "shrewd and cunning hand laid on," exhibited a tameness about the hair and draperies somewhat suspicious. Two other works yet more dubious, are the 'Meleager,' knocked down at 950 guineas, and the 'Melchizedek,' at 570. Of this latter, a sketch for the magnificent Grosvenor picture, we ourselves think infinitely better than of many a decided original; its splendid colouring and its spirited execution are beyond any known imitations of Rubens we have ever seen; nevertheless there is a certain solidity, not to say heaviness, in some parts, unlike this ethereal penciller, and its very finished state less bespeaks a sketch perhaps than a copy. We feel bound likewise, as amateurs, to admit that a great cognoscente shook his head, and our creed about it, at the same time. We hinted last week at Rubens's "pictorial forge," where many a potent journeyman flourished his tools, and from whence many a gorgeous work proceeded, due, like the Arms of Achilles, to several large-handed co-operators with the God-mechanic. No one but he could have imagined and composed the great landscape of 'Meleager,' whilst their coarser strength seems evident in the workmanship. A few years since this picture stood at 2,000*l*. The seventh Rubens is undoubted and undoubtable: a good connoisseur grown blind might almost detect its genuineness by his touch, so spirited are all the traits, so vigorous and salient. We were astonished to hear this transparent little gem tapt down at 290 guineas, not half its value, till we bethought ourselves of the national taste for third-rate Italian and Spanish squallidities. A sapient purchaser at near 100 guineas of some miserable copy from Carracci's 'Parce Somnum' in the Louvre, may illustrate and vindicate our opinion of English gusto. Upon the whole this Collection is thought to have sold well; yet comparing the above prices with those obtained by modern pictures, we are rather of an opposite idea: two or three hundred years hence how many new works, now sold for as many pounds sterling, will sell then for as many pence, while perhaps not one among these ancient pictures but will have retained its full present value, or more probably reached a higher?—The once celebrated collection of Mr. Hamlet, i. e., its remnant, to use no harder term, stands also for auction at Messrs. Christie's this day. We shall give a few words on it next week.

OUR WEEKLY GOSSIP.

WE are glad to observe that many members of the House of Commons still hold to their resolution, to open, if possible, our public buildings, at certain fixed hours daily, free of any charge for admission; and that a Select Committee on National Monuments (with Mr. Hume in the chair) has been appointed to inquire into, and report on, the practicability of the measure. The Committee, it is understood, have no desire to interfere in any way with those who are the legal guardians of the edifices and monuments, but are desirous only of securing occasional free admission, under proper regulations. A series of questions to the following effect have been sent to some of the more distinguished artists:—What do you consider the effects of our splendid cathedral edifices, with their monuments to the memory of the greatest men of past ages, on the feelings of visitors; both with reference to creating a taste for the Fine Arts, and as an incentive to moral and intellectual excellence?—Do the English people pay as much attention to sculptured monuments and paintings as the people of Continental States?—Has the exclusion, until of late, of the public generally, except on payment, had the effect of making them indifferent to the beauties and to the value of sculpture and painting?—Do you think that the public may be admitted, with proper precautions, to see these cathedrals; and what precautions would you recommend to protect the monuments?—Would you recommend an increase of attendants in the cathedrals, or iron rails around the monuments, as the best means of protection?—These questions are pertinent, and "it needs no ghost" to answer them; but there is some apparent confusion in the third. We presume that the Committee refer to the greater facilities now given to the public for visiting the Museum, the National Gallery, Hampton Court,

and other national collections—but the question has seeming reference to our cathedrals. Now there has been no relaxation "of late" in this particular,—on the contrary, the exclusion law has only "of late" had existence. Younger men than ourselves must remember when Poets' Corner, the most interesting spot in Westminster, was open from sunrise to sunset—when the great western entrance and the nave were open for hours together every day. As to the iron rails which formerly surrounded the monuments, they merely served as ladders to help those smit with a peculiar thirst for fame, to write their names beyond the reach of less adventurous blockheads. One active and observant attendant would be infinitely more serviceable.

An autograph of more than usual interest is announced for sale on Monday, by the Messrs. Evans—the autograph of Shakespeare, affixed to the deed of bargain and sale of the house purchased by him in Blackfriars. The deed is dated March 10, 1612, and the seals are yet attached. There have long been five signatures of Shakespeare's received by all parties as genuine, and to these has lately been added the autograph in Florio's translation of Montaigne's Essays. Of these, three are attached to his will in the Prerogative Court; one—the Florio—is now in the British Museum; one is attached (where preserved is not known) to the mortgage deed of this property in Blackfriars; and the present deed of bargain and sale of the same property. The following description of the property is copied from the deed:—"All that dwelling house or tenement with appurtenances situate and being within the Precinct Circuit and Compasse of the late black-friers, London, sometymes in the tenure of James Gardiner Esquire and since that in the tenure of John Fortescue gent. and now or late being in the tenure or occupacōn of one William Ireland or of his assignee or assigns; abutting upon a streete leading downe to Pudle Wharffe on the east part, right against the kings Maiesties Wardrobe; part of w^{ch} said Tenement is erected over a great gate leading to a Capitall Messuage w^{ch} sometyme was in the tenure of William Blackwell Esquire deceased, and since that in the tenure or occupacōn of the right Honorable Henry now Earle of Northumberland."

—It is rather remarkable (says Mr. Evans), that the indenture is stated at the commencement to be "Betweene Henry Walker Citizen and Minstrell of London of thone partie, and William Shakespeare of Stratford Upon Avon in the countie of Warwick, gentleman, William Johnson citizen and Vintner of London, John Jackson and John Hemyng of London, gentlemen, on thother pte:" and that the property was absolutely sold to all four, "theire heires and assigns for ever;" but, that Shakespeare himself paid the whole of the purchase money, amounting to 140*l*. It concludes by declaring, that hereafter the premises, with all fines and recoveries, "shalbee, and shalbee esteemed, adjudged, deemed, and taken to bee, to th'onlie and proper use and behoofe of the said William Shakespeare, his heires, and assigns for ever; and to none other use, intent or purpose." There can be no doubt, however, that Shakespeare was the sole possessor, as he bequeaths in his will to his daughter Susanna Hall, "All that Messuage or tenement with thappurtenances wherein One John Robinson dwelleth situate lying and being in the blackfriers in London nere the Wardrobe." This deed is regularly entered in the Rolls Court, although Malone, who stated the fact in his edition of Shakespeare's Plays, declared in a subsequent page, that he has searched and could not find it. He had most likely forgotten his reference; it is entered in the Index under the name of Shakespeare, the purchaser, instead of H. Walker, the vendor; the latter being the usual mode both in Malone's time, and since. On the reverse of this Document are the names of the persons, who attested it, "Sealed and delivered by the said William Shakespeare, William Johnson, and John Jackson in the pñce of Will: Atkinson, Ed: Oquery, Robert Andrews Scr. Henry Lawrence servant to the same Scr." whose seals it bears, with the Initials H. L. upon them.—On the same day will be sold a Goblet formed from the wood of the mulberry tree planted by Shakespeare, with a medallion of Shakespeare and his arms; executed by Sharpe of Stratford, at the time the tree was cut down. This goblet was for nearly thirty years in the possession of

Mr. Munden, the comedian, by whom it was given to the present possessor.

The first of the Horticultural fêtes of the year was held this day week: a most propitious opening of the season, inasmuch as the weather was lovely to a wish, the show of flowers unequalled at any former May meeting, and the weather and the flowers were enjoyed by five thousand seven hundred visitors, two thousand more than ever appeared "on the turf" at this early period of the year. Among the great attractions of the Exhibition, the Azaleas and Pelargoniums were, perhaps, the most eminent. To specify the principal Horticultural novelties and beauties is impossible: but a line must be given to the splendid bloom of the *Glycine sinensis*, which was more copiously magnificent than we have ever seen it.

In our report of the proceedings of the British Association at Newcastle, we made mention of an extraordinary youth, Gustave Basile, who exhibited before the assembled savans his extraordinary powers of memory—and it is more than probable, as he has since been travelling through the provinces, that many of our readers have themselves witnessed the wonderful facility with which he answered questions in ancient and modern history, geography, &c. We are now requested to announce, that he has just published, in French, his Mnemonical System.

We must spare a corner to record the death of Mr. Barber Beaumont, the founder of the Philosophical Institution in Beaumont Square, lately opened to the public, and which he has liberally endowed. Mr. Beaumont was brought up a miniature painter, and obtained some reputation in his art. In 1802 he published 'A Descriptive Tour in South Wales,' and subsequently many pamphlets and minor publications. In 1806 he instituted the County Fire Office and Provident Life Office, which remained till his death under his superintendence. Mr. Beaumont was a man of great energy and perseverance, the founder and builder-up of his fortune, which is understood to have been considerable. He was in the 67th year of his age.

THE THIRTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL EXHIBITION OF THE SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER COLOURS, at their GALLERY, Pall Mall East, is NOW OPEN. Open each day from Nine till Dusk. Admission, 1*l*. Catalogue, 6*d*. R. HILLS, Sec.

THE SEVENTH ANNUAL EXHIBITION OF THE NEW SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER COLOURS, (FIP), at their GALLERY, Pall Mall, next the British Institution, is NOW OPEN, from 9 o'clock till Dusk. Admission, 1*l*. Catalogue, 6*d*. JAMES FAHEY, Sec.

THE DIORAMA, REGENT'S PARK, JUST OPENED, with a New Exhibition, representing the Interior of the CATHEDRAL OF AUCH, in the South of France, and the SHRINE OF THE NATIVITY, at Bethlehem, taken from a sketch made on the spot by D. Roberts, R.A. in 1838, with various effects of light and shade. Both Pictures are painted by M. Renoux. Open from Ten till Five.

FUNERAL OF NAPOLEON.—GRAND DIORAMIC VIEWS of the PRICESION at the interment of the remains of the Emperor Napoleon, in which the principal figures are the size of life, and every interesting incident of this superb spectacle is faithfully depicted. "In these paintings (says The Times) the magnificence and bustle of the scene are well conveyed to the eye of the spectator, and the whole has the appearance of the actual ceremony, while the general effect is very much assisted by military and sacred music, which is executed during the exhibition by concealed musicians." Open daily, from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M., and from 7 to 10 P.M., at the St. James's Bazaar, St. James's-street.—Admission, 1*l*.

SCIENTIFIC AND LITERARY

GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.

May 10.—G. B. Greenough, Esq., President, in the chair.

1. A paper was read from Major Napier, being an account of his journey from Sur or Tyre by Naplouse and Ramla to Jerusalem. On the 19th of December, Major Napier left Sur for Acre. It is evident from the ruins that the ancient city of Tyre covered a much greater extent of ground than that occupied by Sur. The present population consists principally of Greek Catholics, with a slight sprinkling of Mohammedans; the chief exports are dried figs and tobacco. On the whole road between Sur and Acre there are traces of a Roman causeway, in many places in a very perfect state of preservation. After passing to the south of Nakhorn, the road enters the plain of Acre, which, to the gates of the town, is level and uncultivated. Anxious to abandon a place where the fever was raging with great violence, the Major quitted Acre on the 21st, and crossing the plain in a south-east direction, arrived at the fort and village of Shoofamur; here he entered a range of hills (a continuation of the Anti-Lebanon), gently

undulating, and, when not cultivated with olive trees, covered with the common oak, and bearing much similarity to European scenery. A ride of eight or nine miles through these hills brought the travellers to the considerable village of Nazareth. Having visited all the holy sites of the place, and obtained the consequent indulgences for seven years, he left on the 22nd, and in about an hour emerged from the hills into the extensive plain of Esdraelon, extending to the east as far as the Jordan, and separated from the sea to the west by a continuation of Mount Carmel. This plain, which has ever been the arena on which every army invading Syria has had to display its prowess, is said to be extremely fertile, but at this season of the year there were no signs of vegetation. Near the village of Foulé several sarcophagi were observed, and at the village itself one was used as a trough for watering cattle. No streams of water were met with in the parts of the plain traversed, and in summer the wells are said to be dry. Numerous swallows were observed skimming over the pools in the vicinity of Foulé. Jenin, about twenty miles from Naplouse, is situated at the foot of the Naplouse hills; it is a considerable place, inhabited almost exclusively by Mohammedans, and surrounded by gardens abundantly supplied with excellent water. The country from Jenin to Naplouse bears evident marks of having been formerly cultivated, but it is now totally neglected. In one part of the road on the side of a hill were many grottoes, which, though they may have been enlarged by art, appeared to be natural. They are generally observed on the sides of the hills, but sometimes a perpendicular descent, like a well, leads to spacious subterranean chambers. Naplouse, the ancient Shechem, the capital of Samaria, is a large town, solidly constructed of stone, but, like most places in this neglected country, fast going to decay. It is beautifully situated in an elevated valley, amidst gardens and olive groves. The population is Mohammedan, with a few Jews and Samaritans. In the vicinity are the remains of an aqueduct, the excavation said to contain Joseph's tomb, Jacob's well, and, within the precincts of the town, the remains of a Christian church, probably the pious work of the Empress Helena. Having instructions for the governor of Naplouse, who was at Ramla, Major Napier started for the latter place. In no respect, says the Major, are these ranges (the Naplouse hills) to be compared with either the Lebanon or Anti-Lebanon; they are inferior in cultivation, the people are worse fed and more meanly clad. Ramla is an open town, situated on the supposed site of the ancient Arimathen. The appearance of the inhabitants was wretched in the extreme. Ophthalmia and leprosy showed themselves here in their worst features, and the effects of the latter disease were frightful to behold; the fingers, hands, and limbs of those affected falling off in succession. It appears not to be contagious, and is confined principally to the wretched race by whom it is propagated, as they intermarry, and keep exclusively to themselves. Altogether, says the Major, I never witnessed a more abject looking race than the inhabitants of Ramla. On the 25th, the traveller left Ramla for Jerusalem. The first nine miles was along the plain, the next 18 to Jerusalem, was a constant ascent among the mountains. The road is through defiles and passes, bordered with dwarf shrubs and the prickly evergreen oak, the turmeric plant, and several others. At the village of Abou-el-Hosh there is a good fountain, the first water met with on the road. At a subsequent period, however, a small spring was discovered called the "Olives," about midway between Jerusalem and Ramla Caloni. On passing the gateways into Jerusalem, says the traveller, a feeling of gloom and despondency involuntarily crept over me as I surveyed the "Holy of Holies," now falling to premature decay, the effect of violence and neglect more than that of the venerable hand of time. The leprosy, so prevalent at Ramla, is also observed at Jerusalem, where a small suburb outside the Jaffa gate is appropriated exclusively to the leprose. The road from Jerusalem to Hebron, which is twenty-seven miles south, passes near Bethlehem, to which place, about seven miles from Jerusalem, the country is tolerably cultivated, but further south all sign of cultivation ceases. The low hills are covered with dwarf shrubs, and not even a rill of water is visible to enliven the dreary scene. About

ten or twelve miles from Jerusalem is met a village strongly walled in with a very fine tank of water, evidently the work of former times. This is the only trace of habitation along the whole road. Cultivation at length commences a couple of miles from Hebron. This is a large town; the inhabitants are Mohammedan, with a few Jews, who consider it one of their sacred places, as containing the tombs of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. There is here a fine church attributed to the Empress Helena. Major Napier arrived at Hebron in the evening, and left it next morning for Jaffa, a distance of fifty miles. The first three hours of the route lay through a mountainous and uncultivated country, the sides of some of the hills clothed with pine, and feeding large flocks of goats. On emerging from these, a district is entered, composed of low hills, intersected by extensive and tolerably cultivated valleys till within twelve or fourteen miles of Ramla, where the traveller entered upon a succession of gently undulating slopes extending to the sea. Here the verdant herbage bore testimony to the plentiful supply of water. This portion of the country seemed well cultivated; villages were seen at intervals, herds of camels and troops of gazelles. From Ramla to Jaffa is ten miles, mostly pasture, feeding great numbers of camels and buffaloes, and where game of every description was in the greatest abundance. Jaffa is a considerable walled-in town, on a promontory jutting into the sea, and is approached through a succession of beautiful gardens and orange groves fenced round with cactus, and abounding in tall date trees. It is altogether a place of some importance, but, from its filth, is the very emporium of the plague. The next excursion of the travellers was on a reconnoitering party against Ibrahim Pasha. The party crossing the Valley of Jehosaphat, and skirting the Mount of Olives, struck among the hills in an easterly direction towards the north of the Dead Sea. After a course of eighteen miles through barren and desolate mountains, they entered a plain, extending for six or seven miles to the River Jordan. They passed some remains, said to be the site of ancient Jericho. The present village of that name, about a mile further on, was a heap of ruins from the effect of the conflagration caused by the Egyptians, who, having recrossed the Jordan, the party returned. From Jerusalem Major Napier started on the 28th of December, in company with two Europeans and an escort of fifty horsemen, for Naplouse, a distance of about thirty-six miles. The road, till within five or six miles of Naplouse, lay over barren hills having many excavations and underground habitations, over the roof of one of which the travellers were unconsciously riding. Naplouse is entered by a magnificent olive grove, the trees of great size and age, and many of the branches covered with a sort of mistletoe, with red berries. On the 30th, the party left Naplouse, and, skirting the southern face of Mount Gerezum, followed the course of a torrent stream, into the valley of the Jordan. The foot of the hills is about seven miles from the river. After crossing several tributaries to the Jordan, they halted at Bysan, twenty-seven miles from Naplouse. Bysan is the Scythopolis of the Romans. It is here that the Naplouse hills terminate in a northerly direction, taking a sudden turn to the westward as far as Jenin, by which the plain of the Murge-el-ebu-Amur may be said to reach the Jordan, from which it is separated only by a slight elevation of ground, which forms the connecting link between the spurs of the Anti-Lebanon, bordering on Lake Tiberias, and the range running from Cape Carmel to the south of Hebron. Bysan is about two miles from the nearest part of the Jordan. On the 31st the party left Bysan, and following a northerly direction, skirted the hills which attain a considerable elevation at the point where the Jordan is crossed by the bridge of Mojeimah (the only one between Lake Tiberias and the Dead Sea). The intervening country to the Jordan was cultivated. The river is fifty yards across at the bridge, which is remarkable for solidity, and consists of one arch, evidently of Roman construction. From hence the party took the direction of Nazareth, and an hour's ride brought them to the summit of the pass, from whence the view is very fine and extensive. They halted at Moad, three miles from the eastern bank of the river. On the 1st they left Moad, and came

to the troglodyte village of Om Keiss; the most remarkable place, says Major Napier, I ever saw. They now had reached the high table land; the cold was excessive: few signs of cultivation, and subterranean dwellings, inhabited by a most degraded race. At 4 p.m. they reached Hayreem, twenty-six miles from the Jordan. The descent on the eastern side is much less than in the opposite direction, thereby proving the plain of Damascus to be much more elevated than the valley of the Jordan. On the 2nd of January they turned southward, and a distance of twenty-one miles brought them to Tibney, a hill fort, and capital of the district. On the 3rd they left Tibney, and reached the eastern frontier of the valley of the Jordan, nearly opposite Bysan. The distance from the foot of the Ageloun Hills to the Jordan is about three miles: it is, like the opposite side, uncultivated, and frequented by Bedwines. They forded the river, and from Bysan proceeded in a westerly direction to Jenin. The traveller's next expedition was from Acre to Jaffa; but this country is too well known to render it necessary for us to enter into any details regarding it.

2. The next paper read was an account of the Sepulchre of the Kings at Jerusalem, also by Major Napier.—But, as this could be but ill understood without the plan by which the paper was illustrated, we are compelled to omit it.

3. Lieut. Wood on the Indus.—This very long and very important paper, consisting wholly of technical details, was only read in part; and it would hardly be doing justice to its author to give an extract of an extract. Besides, Lieut. Wood's lately published work on the Oxus, contains a great deal regarding the Indus, on the survey of which, from its mouth to Attak, that officer was employed.

ASIATIC SOCIETY.

THE eighteenth Anniversary was held on the 8th of May, the Right Hon. C. W. Williams Wynn, M.P., in the chair.—The Annual Report began with notifying that His Royal Highness Prince Albert had signified his willingness to become a Vice-Patron, and a contributing member,—an honour which would be more fully appreciated by the members, when it was known that His Royal Highness had been a pupil of Prof. Lassen, of Bonn, a Foreign Member of the Society, and one of the most distinguished Orientalists in Europe. The usual statements of deaths, retirements, and elections were then read; and particular allusion was made to the death of Sir Henry Worsley, whose munificent donation of 1,000*l.* to the Society had been gratefully acknowledged, by the execution of a bust placed in the meeting-room, as a companion to that of the founder of the Society, and first Director, Mr. Colebrooke. The Report then announced the cessation of the Committee of Commerce and Agriculture of the Society as a distinct section, and stated the reasons which induced the Council to propose its merging into the general establishment. The donation of the valuable "Manning Collection," (see ante, page 287,) was then noticed, and a short detail given of the life of Mr. Manning, whose representatives had recently placed the library collected by him at the disposal of the Society. Mention was then made of the proceedings of the Oriental Translation Committee, and the valuable translations of 'Al-Makkari' and 'Masudi,' recently printed by it. It was also stated that the biographical work of Ibn Khallikan was nearly completed; and that the long lost 'Jami al Tuarikh,' of Reschid el-din, so curiously recovered in separate portions within these two years, was rapidly advancing. The third volume of Professor Hügel's 'Haji Khalifa' is nearly completed; and the 'Li-ki,' of M. Julien, is in the press. The several other works now in the progress of translating, under the auspices of the Committee, were also briefly alluded to. Mention was then made of the establishment of a separate Committee, constituted with the object of publishing the original texts of the most esteemed Oriental works, so as to put the standard authors of the East into the hands of the student at a moderate price; and to preserve, by means of the press, many works which might otherwise be lost, or, at best, must remain unknown, except to parties having access to particular libraries. Allusion was then made to the valuable papers received from the Bombay branch of the Society, on the antiquities,

that the causes at present in operation will produce so great a result, but that they will be efficient, if combined with the additional facilities, which he conceives to be essential to the full success of the plan. It is worthy of remark, that in the case of the reduction of the duty on coffee in 1825, a reduction of only 50 per cent., it was not until the fourth year that the revenue recovered its former footing; and had that measure been judged of by its immediate results, or even by those of the second or third years, taken abstractedly, it must have been pronounced a financial failure, whereas, it is at present universally recognized as a measure of eminent and undoubted success; and, indeed, the last year, which was the sixteenth since the reduction, yielded a revenue more than double that obtained under the higher rates, nor is there any reason to suppose that the benefit has attained its maximum. In the department of the postage, viz. that on the London district letters (the old Twopenny Post), the amount of reduction nearly corresponds with the reduction on coffee. The gross revenue on the London district letters (after deducting the receipts on General Post letters, then collected by this department), was about 118,000*l.* for the year 1838, while that for 1840 was 104,000*l.*, showing a deficiency of only 14,000*l.*; so that, to restore the gross revenue of this department to its former amount, an addition of only 13 per cent. on the revenue of 1840 is required. But the present rate of increase is the number of letters is 14 per cent. per annum, so that, assuming the present rate of increase to continue, the lapse of another year is all that is required for the complete restoration of the gross revenue of this department; and this is the more remarkable, when it is considered that the department in question has lost all that numerous class of letters which formerly came from distant towns by private hands, or in parcels, and were distributed in the metropolitan district by its means; and, he adds, the annual gross revenue already obtained in this department equals that produced in the same department so late as 1835, provided that, in the last-mentioned year, the necessary reduction be made for the above-mentioned charges in General Post letters. When the plan of stamps was originally proposed, considerable difference of opinion arose as to the probable willingness of the public to avail itself of the arrangement; however, the demand for stamps has rapidly increased from the period of their first introduction, and lately, the number of stamped letters has exceeded that of letters paid at the time of posting; it is apparent that the increasing use of stamps tends to economy and convenience in the Post Office. In November last, the proportion of unpaid letters in the London General Post was as low as 6 per cent.; it is a little curious, however, that since that time the proportion has gradually increased, and at present it is as high as 9 per cent.: this is, however, to be accounted for by the large increase which has taken place in the number of foreign and colonial letters, and, on none of which is there any inducement to pay the postage in advance, and on a great proportion of which such payment is impossible. The safe and cheap transmission of small sums, manifestly involves important benefits to the public; an increase of more than double took place between corresponding months in 1839 and 1840, while the subsequent reduction in commission on the money orders, made in November last, again increased the amount to more than sixfold, giving more than fourteenfold increase in the last two years.

The writer concludes by comparing the results obtained by the new system, with the expectations that he held out in his pamphlet and evidence, premising that these were all founded on the supposed adoption of his entire plan. Our limits will not permit us to give Mr. Hill's comparison in detail, but we subjoin the leading features.—1st, He calculated that an additional increase of fourfold in the number of letters would sustain the gross Post Office revenue; 2nd, that such an increase in the number of letters would involve an addition of about 300,000*l.* per annum to the expenses of the Post Office; 3rd, That the net revenue would fall from about 1,600,000*l.* to 1,300,000*l.*; 4th, He held out the expectation that the above increase of fivefold would eventually be obtained; 5th, He expressed an opinion that the first year's increase would be to the extent of threefold; 6th, He conceived that the public would pay the

postage in advance; 7th, That the illicit transmission of letters would cease; 8th, that the increased opportunity of communication consequent upon the adoption of the plan, would produce great moral, social, and commercial advantages, and would prove particularly acceptable and beneficial to the poorer class; further, that the deficiency reckoned upon in the net revenue of the Post Office, would eventually be made up by increased productiveness in other fiscal departments.

These were the expectations held out by Mr. Hill.—With respect to the first three heads, he states, that it is as yet impossible to test his anticipations as to the effect of a fivefold increase, but, that means exist to test them on such increase as has been obtained. The increase in the chargeable letters is now about two and a half fold, and should, therefore, according to the author's calculation, afford about half the former gross revenue; but as the latter is considerably more than half of what it was, he conceives his anticipations to be thus far, at least, fully realized. With respect to the increased expense, he shows, that the real increase fairly chargeable to Penny Postage, is about 44,000*l.*, whereas, that anticipated by him was 58,000*l.* on an increase of the number of letters of two and a half a fold. The net revenue which he calculated would arise from the present number of letters, was 428,000*l.* per annum. The actual net revenue for 1840 was 465,000*l.* He is of opinion that the complete adoption of the plan will eventually secure a five-fold increase in the number of letters, and considers, that there would have been a three-fold increase in the number of letters in the first year, had the whole plan been brought into operation. All the information which can be obtained tends to prove, that the illicit transmission of letters has ceased. With respect to the moral, social, and commercial advantages, as also to the beneficial effect on the other branches of the revenue, he finds it impossible to give thus early any precise information, but conceives that there is no doubt of the plan having been of great benefit to commerce, science, and society; and lastly, it is well known that the Postman has now to make long rounds through humble districts, where heretofore, his knock was rarely heard.

HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY.

May 1.—The Anniversary Meeting, Sir C. Lemon, Bart., M.P., in the chair.—From the report of the Auditors it appeared that the income of the Society had last year exceeded its ordinary expenditure by the sum of 1,578*l.* 16*s.* 1*d.*, and that its sources of revenue were steadily becoming more productive. The report of the Auditors was followed by one from the Council, giving a statement of the progress during the year just elapsed. It will be satisfactory to the friends of the Society to know, that although so large a sum as 5,254*l.* 6*s.* 6*d.* has been laid out in the last two years in the form of extraordinary expenditure, the actual liabilities have not been increased more than 1,417*l.* 2*s.* 10*d.* It was stated that 19,341 visitors had attended the garden meetings in 1840, and that within the year 834*l.* 3*s.* had been awarded in medals, which makes the actual outlay under this head of expense alone 4,153*l.* 15*s.* for the last ten years.—Sir O. Mosley, Bart., Mr. Barnard, and Mr. Pepps, were elected new members of Council; His Grace the Duke of Devonshire, President; Mr. Edgar, Treasurer, and Dr. Henderson, Secretary for the ensuing year.

May 4.—Sir C. Lemon, Bart., V.P., in the chair.—C. D. Bruce, J. Foote, W. H. Lloyd, S. Solly, W. Kaye, Esqrs., and Mrs. W. Phillips, were elected.—The plants exhibited were not so numerous as at previous meetings. Mrs. Lawrence furnished, as usual, several finely grown plants, and to them a silver Knightian medal was awarded; a silver Knightian medal was also awarded to G. C. Ridge, Esq., for the *Kennedy coccinea major*; a Banksian medal to W. Wells, Esq., for a fine specimen of the double red Indian Azalea; certificates of Merit to R. Barchard, Esq., for a specimen of *Polygala oppositifolia*, trained as a standard; to Sir E. Antrobus for a seedling Euphyllium; to Sir P. G. Egerton for flowers of a seedling Cactus; and to T. Broekelhurst, Esq., for flowers of the *Coryanthus macrantha*—a very extraordinary flower, the labellum like a bucket, and capable of containing a quantity of honey secreted by two horns placed on each side of it.

MEETINGS FOR THE ENSUING WEEK.

MON.	Geographical Society (Ann.)	One, P.M.
	Linnæan Society (Ann.)	One.
TUES.	Institution of Civil Engineers	Eight.
	Zoological Society	1 p. Eight.
WED.	Society of Arts	Eight.
	Microscopical Society	Eight.
	Royal Society	1 p. Eight.
THUR.	Society of Antiquaries	Eight.
	Royal Society of Literature	Four.
FRI.	Royal Institution	1 p. Eight.

MUSIC AND THE DRAMA

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.—To what point the apparition of a new *prima donna* acts as a tonic, let doctors declare—certain it is, that Madame Grid never performed 'Norma' with such deep passion, such grandeur of voice, and such brilliancy of execution, as on Tuesday evening. Signor Mario, too, was singing in his new manner—from his *best*, which is yet to come, we expect much. After the opera, the ballet-lovers had the satisfaction of welcoming Mlle. Cerito, who has returned, with a twelve-month's progress in her feet, and a twelvemonth's added graces to her general bearing and her pantomimic expressiveness. She was rapturously received, and is fairly on the way to become a *dansuse* of the first class. Much, however, remains to be done in the harmonizing of the motions of her bust and arms with the brilliancy and floating grace of her *pas*. To make the whole body dance together is the great secret of her art.

DRURY LANE.—'Le Nozze di Figaro.'—If the true version of 'Figaro' were the one given by the Germans at Drury Lane, we should much prefer the false one—namely, that by the Italians. But this is not the case: the music of Mozart's *Susanna* was not written to be bawled through without light or shade; nor was the character meant to be acted with the bustling homeliness of an Audrey. His *Countess Almaviva*, again, demands graceful and impassioned, but not spasmodic expression; and a nobility and polish of demeanour belong to the part, which are ill-counterfeited by marking time with outstretched hands and other extravagancies of action. The songs of *Cherubino* were not destined for a voice without lower notes, nor his gambols for a figure which travesties makes unpleasant rather than piquant. These generalities are forced upon us by the coarse performance of Mesdames Heinefetter, Schodel, and Schumann, on Wednesday evening. Herr Mellinger, in the part of the *Count*, belongs to the same awkward troop, whose version of Mozart's elegant comedy is just what huckaback is compared with canonic. Herr Staudigl is the one exception in the cast. His singing and acting of the part of *Figaro* are of a high order of excellence—the latter, in particular, is so gentlemanly and graceful, as to make us wish that the court gentleman, and not the Scapin of the piece, had fallen to his lot. The house was crowded, and the audience was curiously enthusiastic. How far "the wherefore" of its enthusiasm lay in its honour of Mozart's music, how far in a blind faith in German performance, it may not be altogether useless to inquire. We yield to none in love for the composer; and this it is which makes us jealous of such misinterpretations. One thing, however, is well finished at the German opera, which we have too long passed over—we mean the issue of *libretti*, superintended by Mr. Schloss. They are neat and satisfactory, and worthy of being bound up, in expectation of coming seasons.

CONCERTS OF THE WEEK.—Our chronicle of these begins with Miss Steele's entertainment, which was good, as regards the selection of her programme, and the execution of the English singers who took part in it. Foremost among these were Miss Birch, Miss Masson, Madame F. Lablache, and the lady of the concert herself. Her purity of tone and finish of style were sufficiently tested in 'Sull'aria,' which she sang with Madame Dorus-Gras so well as to merit her full share of the *encore*: while her partner in the duet, seems to us more admirable, as a brilliant singer, than ever: to have returned with greater finish, greater boldness, and a new stock of ornaments. We cannot, however, like the mocking-bird work in her grand nightgale song, which she sung at M. Benedict's concert. At Miss Steele's concert, too, we had the pleasure of meeting M. Liszt for the first

time this season. He was never heard to such advantage last year: either his tone has grown richer during his pilgrimage of the twelvemonth, or he is in peculiar force just at present. Anything more colossal, not merely as regards splendour of execution, but also volume of sound, we cannot recall or imagine. He is, if we mistake not, better appreciated than formerly by his audiences, and they may appreciate him without misgiving—for the variety of resources to please them which he possesses is next to inexhaustible. —At *M. Benedict's Concert*, on Monday, his playing of the 'Hexameron' between the acts, roused up the most crowded and coldest audience of the season to something nearer a *furor* than English men and women often indulge in. Nor less admirable was the magnificent accompaniment which he lavished on the 'Pregiera' from Rossini's 'Mosé.' This 'Pregiera,' by the way, was a remarkable specimen of choral singing, and exhibited, in a small compass, the affluence of *M. Benedict's programme*. The singers who took part in it were—Mesdames Grisi, Persiani, Viardot-Garcia, and Dorus-Gras; Mdles. Löwe, Meerti, and Ernesta Grisi; Signori Rubini, Mario, Flavio, Buzzi, Lablache, F. Lablache, and Mr. J. Parry (Tamburini being indisposed); piano, MM. Liszt and Benedict; flute, M. Dorus; violin, M. Vieuxtemps; horn, M. Puzzi; harp, Mdle. Bertucat. It is impossible to conceive anything finer than the body of tone given out by these picked voices. To go over *M. Benedict's programme*, item by item, is beyond our power: we can only dwell upon its chief novelties. The first was De Beriot's 'Tremolo,' which was magnificently performed by M. Vieuxtemps. The very continuity in one difficult figure, however, which is the main feature of the composition, makes it less attractive as a concert-piece, than others we could name. The duet from 'La Sonnambula,' too, excellently played by the violinist with its composer, *M. Benedict*, is not to be passed over. The greatest novelties in the vocal portion of the *programme*, were an Italian *scena* with horn accompaniment *obligato*, composed by the *bénéficiaire*, a melodious and attractive composition, wonderfully sung by Madame Viardot-Garcia. This lady distances all her sister vocalists, in originality and passion of style combined with execution; but her voice refuses, at present, to second her. All lovers of the highest order of concert and oratorio singing should wish her the health and strength which alone are wanting to her gaining the highest success. A welcome novelty, too, was Graun's 'Mi paventi,' one of Maria's most eminent songs, which has been revived by Mdle. Löwe. She executed it with steadiness—her shake, too, as we said last week, is most brilliant; but in many of the long formal divisions the voice was false, and the passage *got rid of*, rather than finished with that consummate polish which alone can make such an ancient *braun* palatable to modern ears. We are led to pay our closest attention to this lady from current rumours, which hint at her exaltation, under a coming opera management, to the throne which Grisi or Persiani at present fill; and it is better she should be strictly criticized as a stranger, than constantly complained of as a resident. Moreover, she is too clever and distinguished an artist not to deserve whatever amount of benefit comes of plain speaking.

The *Sixth Philharmonic Concert*, which began some two hours after *M. Benedict's Court-card Concert* was over, suffered much from being badly conducted. One of the symphonies hurt—not to say spoiled—on the occasion was Beethoven's gorgeous work in c minor. General coarseness of reading, a total uncertainty on the part of the band when to recommence after a pause—such glaring faults as these, should not be obvious at this epoch, in the performance of our only instrumental Concert; and they must be amended, or in a couple of years more the Philharmonic Society will have ceased to exist. In the first act, a M. Blas played a *fantasia* on the clarinet with some taste; but the composition was a poor one, and his tone is neither of first-rate quality, nor always in tune. In the second act, Herr David, too long waited for, reappeared in a new and very brilliant concerto, with more than his old success. His style is simply "the best thing going" on the violin—animated with a life, truth, and an expression clear of the slightest trick or caricature. While he never attempts to be a wonder-player, his execution

has a solidity as well as a brilliancy which make it wear all the better, from its very absence of effects *ad captandum*. The London public has yet to learn his value as a quartet player, and as a leader—and for his eminence in both characters and our want of any commanding talent in either department, we wish he was settled among us. A very fine bass song from Handel's 'Il Resurrezione,' was very finely sung by Signor Frederic Lablache. We must devote a line or two more to Mdle. Meerti's singing. Her 'Ave Maria,' in the morning, had been excellent and impassioned—an honest and pathetic interpretation of Schubert's lovely song. In the evening, she undertook the more ambitious 'Non più di fiori' of Mozart. The completion of the undertaking justified the ambition. Her voice is of the finest mezzo-soprano quality (verging a little too much towards the tremulous-expressive in some of its tones), and her style is easy, broad, and artist-like. She is a singer of as much good promise as performance.

We must lengthen this article by a notice of yet one Concert more—that given by Miss Henrietta Roedel. Independently of the pianoforte playing of the concert giver, which is clever and musician-like—as we had occasion to observe in her performance of the first movement of Hummel's Concerto in a minor—her *programme* was made attractive by the presence of many of the German opera singers, and the novelty of the music introduced by them. Though the composition of the Air by Adolff Müller, which Herr Staudigl sang, was somewhat heavy, his execution of it was so admirably chaste and finished, so vocal in its tone, and so poetical in its delivery, as to place his contribution in the very highest place among the bass songs of the morning. Why he has been passed over by the Concert-givers of the season, is a mystery past fathoming. Apropos of bass singers, Mr. Weiss, a young countryman of ours, was heard on the occasion. He possesses a voice so rich and extensive, as may enable him, if he studiously and intellectually cultivate it, to challenge the Lablaches and Staudigls of Italy and Germany. Apropos, too, of *buffo* singers, we must give the fullest amount of credit which one line can contain to Mr. John Parry. His comic songs are excellent, and—no wonder!—drive his audiences to the hysterical point of mirth.

HAYMARKET.—The return of Mr. Charles Kean, accompanied by Miss Ellen Tree, and their appearance in 'Macbeth' on Monday, did not attract an overflowing house, nor did their performance elicit any vehement demonstration of delight—indeed, the tragedy was less than ordinarily effective, for it was not until the "terrific combat" in the last scene that the audience were excited to any degree of enthusiasm. Mr. C. Kean, we were glad to see, has abated some of his violent mannerisms; but a more varied and intelligent reading of the part is still a desideratum. Miss Ellen Tree could only by the exercise of higher art than she is mistress of, realize our idea of *Lady Macbeth*. Mr. Phelps's performance of *Macduff* is quite a feature in the representation—we cannot say as much for the new vocalist who played *Hecate*.—On Tuesday, Mr. Wallack was, by some strange chance in the chapter of accidents, thrown into the part of *Voltaire*, in a petite comedy, evidently taken from the French, entitled, 'The Philosopher of Berlin,' constructed for the especial object of exhibiting "the brilliant Frenchman" "in his habit as he lived." Such a personation would have tasked the genius and skill of a Fleury; and it is needless to say, that Mr. Wallack failed entirely—indeed, the piece is one of those that can only be represented on the Parisian stage. One would think that the production of plays by living dramatists was interdicted at our theatres by a heavy penalty, so chary are managers of bringing forward any novelty the work of native talent; yet we see in the successful career of 'Money' and 'London Assurance' how far a moderate amount of invention, aided by stage tact, will go towards achieving popularity.

MISCELLANEA

Electro-Magnetic Power.—We mentioned last week that Mr. Fox Talbot had taken out a patent for the application of electro-magnetism as a motive power. The *Allgemeine Zeitung*, since received, mentions that Herr Storer, of Leipsic, has made a wonderful discovery in this way; and further ob-

serves, that not only is the first idea of this invention German, but that all the improvements yet made are the offspring of German intellect and German perseverance. How this may be, we know not. We are quite willing to give all credit to any man, of any nation, who shall succeed in any beneficial application of this power; but so far as we can learn from the *Allgemeine Zeitung* itself, Herr Storer, "by following up and carrying out the ideas of Jacobi, to whom the first merit of the discovery is due, has succeeded in constructing a small machine, the power of which is as yet limited to the raising of only a moderate weight, and putting a turning lathe in motion, but which is nevertheless sufficient to render perfectly evident the whole mechanism of the important invention, and which, as the constructor observed, needs only to be enlarged to produce more practical effects." Now "small machines, the power of which is limited to the raising of only a moderate weight," have been invented by fifty different persons, in many different nations. Jacobi himself went far beyond it two or three years since, when he worked a boat on the Neva by electro-magnetic power. The whole question of the discovery rests on the assertion that the mechanism "needs only to be enlarged to produce more practical effects," and we must wait for something more than assertion, for projectors are generally sanguine.

Balloons.—We find the following in the *Moniteur Parisien*:—"An experiment of the highest interest has been performed at the Chateau de Villetaneuse, near St. Denis. M. S. and his son had for some time past announced publicly that they had succeeded in the means of directing balloons in the air, and several experiments on a small scale in the court-yard of the Ecole Militaire, in Paris, had been attended with satisfactory results. The experiment of Monday has verified all their hopes. M. S., after rising to a height of about 250 metres with a balloon constructed by himself and his father, set at work their ingenious mechanism, and immediately the balloon proceeded to the west, notwithstanding a pretty strong wind blowing from that point. He then returned, and sailed about in various directions, the balloon rising or lowering at the will of the aeronaut without the apparent use of any kind of ballast. The experiments lasted for three hours, at the expiration of which time M. S. descended at the point from which he had started, amidst the acclamations of the spectators."

Engraving in Relief by means of Voltaic Electricity.—Mr. G. H. Hoffman, of Margate, proposes certain modifications of the processes at present in use, the result of which he conceives will be found greatly superior. A flat copper-plate, such as is used by engravers, is to be covered with thick soft etching-ground; in this grooves are to be scratched or cut, or dots stippled with a blunt or sharp point down to the copper, as in common etching: the plate is then to be immersed, and the copper deposited in the usual manner, and the electric action to be continued until the deposit forms one solid sheet. The compound plate is then to be heated over a spirit lamp, so that the etching ground may be melted and run out. The plates are then to be separated; and, after carefully washing with hot oil of turpentine, the engraving will appear, polished, sharp and perfect. Mr. Hoffman has obligingly forwarded to us a clever specimen, the result of a first experiment.

Welding of Metals.—It has generally been considered that iron and platinum are the only metals which can be welded without previous fusion. M. Fournet conceives that lead may be added to the number, possessing already sufficient softness for the purpose. This consideration has led him to treat different metallic powders, so as to give them ductility and cohesion, without passing through the intermediate stage of fusion. The first operated on pulverulent silver, reduced from the chloride by sulphuric acid and zinc: this powder was heated in a crucible, so as to bring the particles in such approximation that they would bear the strokes of a hammer without chapping. It was then reheated, and hammered, until a bar of metal was obtained precisely in the same manner as with platinum. Gold afforded similar results. Copper offered more difficulties, in consequence of the facility with which the sub-oxide is formed. M. Fournet suggests the idea of welding by this process gold and silver together.

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[Advertisement.]

NATIONAL LOAN FUND LIFE ASSURANCE AND DEFERRED ANNUITY SOCIETY.

The Annual Meeting of the above Company was held at the National Theatre on Wednesday, May 13th. At half-past 7 o'clock the Directors entered the room, and Mr. Lamlie presided over the chair.

After the advertisement calling the meeting had been read, the CHAIRMAN said—Gentlemen, before the report which the directors have prepared is laid before you, I beg to make a few observations; and, first, on the part of the directors, I have to express their great pleasure in again meeting the proprietors. The report itself embodies the sentiments which they have felt it their duty to bring before your notice. I will therefore not detain you longer than to request the secretary to read it to you, and calling your attention to it.

The SECRETARY (Mr. Ferguson Camroux) then read the following report:—

"The Second Annual Report of the Directors of the National Loan Fund Life Assurance Society to the Proprietors."

"May 12. "The directors have to express their gratification in meeting for the second time the proprietors, on the recurrence of the annual general meeting of the society.

"Before the year 1843 it will not be the duty of the directors to place the accounts, calculations, and profit and loss of the society, before the proprietors and the public. The need of settlement provides that this account shall be rendered at that period. Had it been deemed expedient to have prepared a statement at this early period, since the commencement of the society, the directors had the power to have done so in the present year. But inasmuch as it would have involved a decision with regard to bonuses to the policy-holders, which must follow after the first investigation of the business of the society, the directors have deemed it more prudent, notwithstanding their own wishes to express to the country, the extent of 5,599,192, but there is another point that is not stated in it, but on which I can now afford you information, and that is, the number of lives, that, according to the calculations of the society, should have dropped, and the sum the society should have paid if the selection of lives they have made had not been better than the average expectation—That, however, I learn from the actuary, should have been 23, and the sum that we expected to have been called on to pay, 12,160. I think I may therefore with confidence claim for the directors the credit for prudent deliberation on every risk that is accepted on the part of this society. Indeed we have been frequently blamed for our caution; but when it is considered how deeply interested those are who assure with the society in this respect, I think I am warranted in saying that such circumspection is valuable. The report refers to the discussion there has been for some time carried on in the sufficiency of rates of premium. Undoubtedly the tendency has been for some years past towards low rates, and it appears as if there were undue competition in this respect. There must, however, be limits below which nothing could be more dangerous, nothing could be more mischievous, to exceed. (Hear, hear.) This disposition, however, is fortunately stopped, and it would appear as if the public mind had lent itself on the opposite course. At this moment, therefore, I am glad to see the subject is likely to be well investigated. I mean for the satisfaction of the public mind; for amongst men well acquainted with the subject of life contingencies, such an investigation by a committee of Parliament would be to them of little value; but there requires a high authority, such as a committee of that kind would be, to pronounce on this subject, and which would be a guide to those who are not able for themselves to collect all the elements of the calculation. From the foundation of this society the directors have seen that this subject must, some time or other, come under the notice of the Legislature; and, in consequence, before we fixed our tables, we instituted the fullest investigation. The rates of the society will be found to give the most equal charge for any age of life; they are not low rates, nor are they so high as those founded on the Northampton tables. Another topic

"The total number of shares disposed of amounts to 19,813, and on which the sum of 44,579. 5s. has been paid.

"The increasing business of the society, and the accumulation of its funds, besides the burden to the policy-holders of too large a paid-up capital, has induced the directors, at the present instance, to call in several parties interested in the society, to consider the propriety of recommending to the shareholders the conversion of the capital into shares of 20l. instead of 10l. each, the present nominal amount of each share. This recommendation, which the directors now make, has for its object the giving increased value to the stock, inasmuch as the one-third of the profits on the business of the society, which belongs to the proprietors, (besides 5 per cent. on the stock paid-up capital) would then be divided on 62,500l. of stock, instead of 119,500l., the sum originally intended to be called up, while the amount of subscribed capital and the security to the assured would remain the same. Thus, without any further payment being made on the 20l. shares, in addition to that already paid on the 10l. shares (except the sum of 5s. per share, in respect to preliminary expenses, provided for in the deed of settlement,) the interest of each proprietor in the profits of the company will be nearly doubled.

"The directors have availed themselves of the occasion of the general meeting to place this recommendation before the proprietors for their approbation. At the same time, in the event of that, it will require the signature of each proprietor to a short deed, which the directors have ordered to be prepared for the purpose.

"The directors cannot close their report without advertising to the difficulties they have met with in extending the efficient agency of the society. A very great part of the country yet remains unoccupied by any of its branches or agencies. The directors have always felt unwilling to commit the society into inefficient hands, and have been careful to select only such individuals as agents who, joined to respectability, had the leisure and activity, besides a true appreciation of the extent to which, with the requisite perseverance, the principles of the society could be worked in every district of the country. The directors are happy to say that they can reckon many such individuals amongst the agents of the society, and who are now reaping the fruits of their perseverance; but there yet exists a great space where similar talents could be employed with great benefit to its interests.

"The business to be transacted at the present meeting is the election of four directors in lieu of John Elliottson, M.D., F.R.S.; George Langley, Esq.; Clement Tabor, Esq.; and Joseph Thompson, Esq., whose period of office has expired; all of whom are eligible to be re-elected, and offer themselves accordingly.

"The election of one auditor in place of Professor Wheatstone, F.R.S., whose term of office has expired, and who is also re-eligible, and offers himself accordingly.

"The directors have to propose John Riddell Stodart, Esq. for election as a director, and for the confirmation of the appointment by the Court, as a director, of John Griffith Frith, Esq., and the election as an auditor of Prof. Graves, A.M., F.R.S., in place of the late lamented Dr. Olmuth Gregory.

"T. LAMIE MURRAY, Chairman."

The report having been read, the CHAIRMAN said—If any proprietor should now wish to address any observations to the meeting, or require any explanations from the directors, I shall be happy to hear him.

The CHAIRMAN—Since no proprietor wishes to put any question, it will now be my duty to move that "the report now read be adopted by the meeting, printed, and distributed to the proprietors." Before doing so, I would beg to call your attention to some of its statements. It is not my intention to detain you by any lengthened observations; the report speaks for itself. One thing you will find stated in it, and that is, out of the whole number of policies issued—namely, 1,611, only eleven of them have become claimants on the society, to the extent of 5,599,192, but there is another point that is not stated in it, but on which I can now afford you information, and that is, the number of lives, that, according to the calculations of the society, should have dropped, and the sum the society should have paid if the selection of lives they have made had not been better than the average expectation—That, however, I learn from the actuary, should have been 23, and the sum that we expected to have been called on to pay, 12,160. I think I may therefore with confidence claim for the directors the credit for prudent deliberation on every risk that is accepted on the part of this society. Indeed we have been frequently blamed for our caution; but when it is considered how deeply interested those are who assure with the society in this respect, I think I am warranted in saying that such circumspection is valuable. The report refers to the discussion there has been for some time carried on in the sufficiency of rates of premium. Undoubtedly the tendency has been for some years past towards low rates, and it appears as if there were undue competition in this respect. There must, however, be limits below which nothing could be more dangerous, nothing could be more mischievous, to exceed. (Hear, hear.) This disposition, however, is fortunately stopped, and it would appear as if the public mind had lent itself on the opposite course. At this moment, therefore, I am glad to see the subject is likely to be well investigated. I mean for the satisfaction of the public mind; for amongst men well acquainted with the subject of life contingencies, such an investigation by a committee of Parliament would be to them of little value; but there requires a high authority, such as a committee of that kind would be, to pronounce on this subject, and which would be a guide to those who are not able for themselves to collect all the elements of the calculation. From the foundation of this society the directors have seen that this subject must, some time or other, come under the notice of the Legislature; and, in consequence, before we fixed our tables, we instituted the fullest investigation. The rates of the society will be found to give the most equal charge for any age of life; they are not low rates, nor are they so high as those founded on the Northampton tables. Another topic

I would briefly allude to—the directors have always had a strong desire to increase the number of respectable and efficient agents throughout the country, as there are some points connected with this society which require the most strenuous exertion, and I can say with safety, that in general our agents have been more efficient, perhaps than those of most other societies. Having, admitted these few observations, I will now put the motion.

The motion having been carried unanimously, Mr. ADDAMS, of Exeter, said—Mr. Chairman, the report which has been read to us is of so cheering a nature, that I think little can be said upon it. There is everything that is calculated to fill us with hope (hear); and from what I have observed in my own district, I can state that that hope will be strengthened every day. In that district, in the west, there are some very efficient agents, but many are not so in the parts they have undertaken. We are doing a very fair rate of business in Exeter and other parts of Devon, with which parts I am conversant, seeing the accounts and proceedings weekly. Unfortunately, in many parts of that county this society has not been sufficiently worked. I have the pleasure to announce, however, that this very week an extensive district has been taken up by one of our agents. (Hear, hear.) I have no doubt that, if other local districts will adopt the same line of conduct, we shall very soon be able to carry the operations of this society through the whole of the provinces, as originally intended. (Hear, hear.)

The CHAIRMAN—I beg to say one word more with respect to agencies. It is desirable that the most efficient agents be obtained, which I believe has been done: some idea of this may be derived from the fact that 22,500l. per annum is the income of this society, and, for the third year, this sum is very considerable. Success creates success, and if the future will be equal to the past, it will be very good; but I think, from all appearances, it will be even better. (Hear, hear.) A great desire is manifested to obtain efficient agents, but we have always considered it better to have no agent at all than to have one not equal to the task which this society imposes. We have since our commencement discharged several on account of their inefficiency. As we have now no more business to enter into of this nature, I will propose that the following gentlemen be re-elected as directors for the ensuing year:—John Elliottson, M.D., F.R.S.; George Langley, Esq.; Clement Tabor, Esq.; and Joseph Thompson, Esq.,—which was carried unanimously.

Professor Wheatstone, F.R.S., was then re-elected as an auditor; John Riddell Stodart, Esq., and John Griffith Frith, Esq., were also elected as new directors; and Professor Graves, A.M., F.R.S., as an auditor.

Mr. MILLER, of Sunderland, moved a vote of thanks to the Chairman and the other officers of the society, for their able management of the institution up to this period; which was unanimously carried.

The CHAIRMAN begged to return his sincere thanks for the mark of approbation conferred upon him and his brother directors.

A vote of thanks was then moved to the Secretary, who returned thanks, and the meeting separated.

Entire satisfaction seemed to prevail throughout the whole of the proceedings.

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